



*J. Wille del.*  
*The Widow Calas, petitioning the K. of France,  
against the Decree of the Judges of Toulouse.*  
*J. Hall sculp.*



THE  
WORKS  
OF  
M. DE VOLTAIRE.

Translated from the FRENCH.

WITH  
NOTES, HISTORICAL, CRITICAL,  
AND EXPLANATORY.

By T. FRANKLIN, D.D.  
Chaplain to his Majesty, and late Greek Professor in  
the University of Cambridge.

T. SMOLLETT, M.D.  
AND OTHERS.

A NEW EDITION.

VOLUME XXIV.

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W O R K S

M. DE VOLTAIRE.

NOTES, HISTORICAL, CRITICAL,  
AND ANATOMIC.

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PROSE WORKS  
OF

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A  
TREATISE  
UPON  
TOLERATION, &c.

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## CHAP. I.

A brief ACCOUNT of the Death of JOHN  
CALAS.

THE murder of John Calas, committed at Toulouse with the sword of justice, the 9th of March 1762, is an event, which, on account of its singularity, calls for the attention of the present age, and that of posterity. We soon forget the croud of victims who have fallen in the course of innumerable battles, not only because this is  
B a destiny

## 2 TREATISE upon TOLERATION.

a destiny inevitably connected with a life of warfare, but because those who thus fall might also have given death to their enemies, and did not lose their lives till after having first stood in their own defence. Where the danger and the advantage are equal, our wonder ceases, and even pity itself is in some measure lessened; but where the father of an innocent family is delivered up to the sword of error, prejudice, or enthusiasm, where the accused person has no other defence but his conscious virtue; where the arbiters of his destiny have nothing to hazard in putting him to death, but the having been mistaken, and where they may murder with impunity under the sanction of a judicial process; then every one is ready to cry out, every one brings the case home to himself, and sees with fear and trembling, that no person's life is in safety in a court erected to watch over the lives of the subject; the public unite in demanding vengeance.

In this strange affair, we find religion, self-murder and parricide blended. The object of enquiry was, whether a father and a mother had murdered their own son with a view to please God, and whether a brother had murdered his brother, or a friend his friend; or whether the  
judges

judges had to reproach themselves with having publickly executed an innocent father, or with having acquitted a guilty mother, brother, and friend.

John Calas, a person of sixty-eight years of age, had followed the profession of a merchant at Toulouse for upwards of forty years, and had always borne the character of a tender parent in his family and neighbourhood; he was himself by religion a protestant, as was also his wife, and all his children, one son only excepted, who had abjured heresy, and to whom the father allowed a small annuity; indeed, the good man appeared so far from being infected with that absurd zeal, which destroys the bands of society, that he even approved of the conversion of his son Lewis Calas: he had for above thirty years kept in his house a maid servant, who was a zealous catholic, and who had brought up all his children.

Another of his sons, whose name was Mark Anthony, was a man of letters, but, at the same time, of a restless, gloomy, and impetuous disposition. This young man finding, that he had no prospect of getting into business as a merchant, for which indeed he was very unfit,

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nor of being admitted to the bar as a lawyer, ~~as~~ not being able to obtain the requisite certificates of his being a catholic, resolved to lay violent hands upon himself, and gave some intimation of his design to one of his friends: in order to confirm himself in the resolution he had formed, he carefully collected every thing that had been written upon the subject of suicide, all which he read with great attention; at length, one day having lost all his money at play, he chose that as a most proper opportunity for putting his design in execution. One Lavaisse, a young man of nineteen years of age, the son of a lawyer in great repute at Toulouse, and who was esteemed by every one who knew him, happened to come from Bourdeaux the evening before \*; when he went by chance to sup with the Calas family at their house, being an acquaintance of that family's, and of Mark Anthony Calas in particular. Old Calas, his wife, Mark Anthony their eldest son, and Peter their second son, supped all together that evening; after supper was over, they retired into another room, when Mark Anthony suddenly disappeared. After some time, young Lavaisse took his

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\* 12 October, 1761.



leave, and Peter Calas accompanied him down stairs; when they came to the warehouse they saw Mark Anthony hanging in his shirt behind the door, and his coat and waistcoat folded up and laid upon the counter; his shirt was not in the least rumpled, nor his hair, which he had dressed that day, in any wise disordered; there was no wound upon his body, nor any other mark of violence †.

We shall not here enter into all the minute circumstances with which the lawyers have filled their briefs; nor shall we attempt to describe the grief and distraction of the unhappy parents; their cries were heard by the whole neighbourhood. Lavaisse and Peter Calas, almost beside themselves, ran, the one to fetch a surgeon, and the other an officer of justice. While they were thus employed, and old Calas and his wife in all the agonies of grief, the people of the town gathered in crouds about the house: The Toulousians are a superstitious and

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† After the body was carried to the town-house indeed, there was found a little scratch upon the end of the nose, and a small black and blue spot upon the breast; but these were probably occasioned by some carelessness in removing the corpse.

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head-strong people, and look upon every one, even their own relations, who are not of the same religion of themselves, as monsters and objects of detestation. It was at Toulouse that a solemn thanksgiving was ordered for the death of Henry III. and that the inhabitants took an oath to murder the first person who should propose to acknowledge that great and good prince Henry IV. for their sovereign; and this same city still continues to solemnize, by an annual procession, illuminations, and bonfires, the day in which about two hundred years ago, it ordered the massacre of four thousand of its citizens for being heretics. In vain has the council issued six arrets, prohibiting the keeping this detestable anniversary, the Toulousians still continuing to celebrate it as a high festival.

Some one among the mob, a greater enthusiast than the rest, cried out, that John Calas himself had hanged his son; this cry became in an instant unanimous: some persons taking occasion to observe, that the deceased was to have made his abjuration as the next day, and that his own family and young Lavaisse had murdered him, out of the hatred they bore to the catholic religion, no sooner was this opinion broached, than it was fully believed by every

every one; and the whole town was persuaded, that it is one of the articles of the protestant religion, for a father or mother to murder their own son, if he attempts to shew any inclination to change his faith.

When the minds of the populace are once put into a ferment, they are not easily appeased; it was now imagined, that all the protestants of Languedoc had assembled together the preceding night, and had chosen by a plurality of voices, one of their sect for an executioner; that the choice had fallen upon Lavaisse; that this young man had, in less than four and twenty hours, received the news of his election, and had come from Bourdeaux to assist John Calas, his wife, and their son Peter, to murder a son, a brother, and a friend.

The sieur David, capitoul of Toulouse, instigated by those rumours, and being desirous to make himself be taken notice of, by the ready execution of his office, took a step contrary to all the established rules and ordinances, by ordering the Calas family, together with their catholic maid servant and Lavaisse, to be put in irons.

## 2 TREATISE upon TOLERATION.

After this a monitary was published, which was as erroneous as the former step. Nay, matters were carried still farther; Mark Anthony Calas had certainly died a Calvinist, and as such, if he had laid violent hands upon himself, his body ought to have been dragged upon a hurdle; whereas it was interred with the greatest funeral pomp in the church of St. Stephen, notwithstanding the curate entered his protest against this profanation of holy ground.

There are in Languedoc four orders of penitentiaries, the white, the blue, the grey, and the black, who wear a long capuchin or hood, having a mask of cloth falling down over the face, in which are two holes for the sight. These orders wanted the duke of Fitz-James to become one of their body, but he refused them. On the present occasion the white penitentiaries performed a solemn service for Mark Anthony Calas as for a martyr; nor was the festival of a real martyr ever celebrated with greater pomp by any church: but then this pomp was truly terrible. Beneath a magnificent canopy was placed a skeleton, which was made to move by springs; this skeleton was to represent Mark Anthony Calas, holding in one hand a branch of palm, and in the other, the pen



## TREATISE upon TOLERATION. 9

pen with which he was to sign his abjuration of heresy ; or rather, as the sequel proved, the death-warrant of his father.

And now nothing more remained to be done for this wretch who had been his own murderer but the office of canonization ; the people, already to a man, looked upon him as a saint, some invoked him, some went to pray at his tomb, some besought him to work miracles, while others gravely recounted those he had already performed ; a monk pulled out one or two of his teeth, in order to have some lasting relics ; an old woman, more pious than the rest, but unhappily troubled with a deafness, declared, that she had heard the sound of bells very plain at his interment ; and a priest was cured of an apoplectic fit, after taking a stout emetic : verbal processes were drawn up of these stupendous miracles ; and the author of this account has in his possession an affidavit, to prove, that a young man of Toulouse, had his brain turned, on having prayed several nights successively at the tomb of the new saint, without having been able to obtain the miracle he requested of him.

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Among the order of the white penitentiaries there were some magistrates of justice; the death of John Calas seemed then inevitable.

But what more particularly hastened his fate, was the approach of that singular festival, which, as I have already observed, the Toulousians celebrate every year, in commemoration of the massacre of four thousand Hugonots; the year 1762, happened to be the *annum seculare* of this execrable deed. The inhabitants were busied in making preparations for the solemnity; this circumstance added fresh fuel to the heated imagination of the populace: every one cried out, that a scaffold for executing the Calas family upon, would be one of the greatest ornaments of the ceremony; and that heaven itself seemed to have brought them thither as victims, to be sacrificed to our holy religion. Twenty persons were ear witnesses to these speeches, and to others still more outrageous. And this, in the present age! this at a time when philosophy has made so great a progress! and while the pens of an hundred academies are employed in inculcating humanity and gentleness of manners; It should seem, that enthusiasm, enraged at the late suc-

success of reason, fought under her standard with redoubled fury.

Thirteen judges met every day, to try this cause : they had not, they could not, have any proofs against this unhappy family ; but mistaken zeal held the place of proofs. Six of the judges continued a long time obstinate, being resolved to sentence John Calas, his son, and Lavaissie, to be broke upon the wheel, and his wife to be burnt at the stake ; the other seven judges, rather more moderate, were at least for having the accused examined ; the debates were frequent and long. One of the judges, convinced in his mind of the innocence of the parties, and of the impossibility of the crime laid to their charge, spoke warmly in their favour ; he opposed the zeal of humanity to that of cruelty, and openly pleaded the cause of the Calas family in all the houses of Toulouse where misguided religion demanded with incessant cries the blood of these unfortunate wretches. Another judge, well known for his violence and severity, went about the town, raving with as much fury against the accused, as his brother had been earnest in defending them. In short, the contest became so warm, that both

B 6

were

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were obliged to enter protests against each other's proceedings, and retire into the country.

But by a strange fatality, the judge who had been on the favourable side, had the delicacy to persist in his exceptions, and the other returned back to give his vote against those on whom he could no longer sit as judge; and it was his single vote which carried the sentence of being broke upon the wheel against them, there being eight voices against five, one of the six merciful judges being at last, after much contestation, brought over to the rigorous side.

In my opinion, in cases of parricide, and where the master of a family is to be devoted to the most dreadful punishment, the sentence ought to be unanimous; inasmuch, as the proofs of so unparallel'd \* a crime, ought to be proved

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\* I know of but two instances in history of fathers having murdered their children on the score of religion; the first is the father of St. Barbara, as she is called; it seems he had ordered two windows to be made in his bathing-room. St. Barbara, in his absence, took it into her head to make a third in honour of the holy trinity: she also with the end  
of



proved, in such a manner, as to satisfy all the world; and the least shadow of a doubt in a case of this nature, should be sufficient to make a judge tremble, who is about to pass sentence of death. The weakness of our reason, and the insufficiency of our laws, become every day more obvious; but surely, there cannot be a

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of her finger made the sign of the cross upon the marble pillars; which remained deeply impressed thereon: her father, in a violent fury to have his room thus marked, runs after her with his sword in his hand with an intention to kill her; she flies towards a mountain, which very complaisantly opens upon her approach to give her a passage. Her father finds himself obliged to go round about, and at length gets hold of his fugitive daughter, whom he strips and prepares to scourge; but God envelopes her with a white cloud; however, after all, her father caused her head to be struck off. This is the story, as we find it related in the book called, *The Flower of Saints*.

The second instance is of prince Hermenegildus who raised a rebellion against the king his father, and gave him battle in the year 584, but was himself defeated and slain by one of his father's generals; however, he has been placed among the martyrs, because his father was an Arian.

greater

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greater example of this deficiency, than that one single casting vote should be sufficient to condemn a fellow citizen to be broke alive upon the wheel: the Athenians required at least fifty voices, over and above the one half of the judges, before they would dare to pronounce sentence of death; but to what does all this tend? Why to what we know, but make very little use of, that the Greeks were wiser and more humane than ourselves.

It appeared altogether impossible that John Calas, who was an old man of sixty-eight, and had a long while been troubled with a swelling and weakness in his legs, should have been able by himself to have mastered his son and hanged him, who was a stout young fellow of eight and twenty, and more than commonly robust; therefore he must absolutely have been assisted in this act by his wife, his other son Peter Calas, Lavaisse, and by the servant maid, and they had been together the whole night of this fatal adventure. But this supposition is altogether as absurd as the other; for can any one believe, that a servant, who was a zealous catholic, would have permitted those whom she looked upon as heretics, to murder a young man whom she herself had brought up, for his attachment to a religion

ligion that she herself was devoted to? That Lavaisſe would have come purpoſely from Bourdeaux to aſſiſt in hanging his friend, whoſe pretended converſion he knew nothing of; or, that an affectionate mother would have joined in laying violent hands upon her own ſon? And laſtly, how could they all together have been able to ſtrangle a young man ſtronger than them all, without a long and violent ſtruggle, or without his making ſuch a noiſe as muſt have been heard by the whole neighbourhood, without repeated blows paſſing between them, without any marks of violence, or without any of their cloaths being in the leaſt diſordered!

It was evident, that if this murder could in the nature of things have been committed, the accuſed perſons were all of them equally guilty, becauſe they did not quit each other's company an inſtant the whole night; but then it was equally evident that they were not guilty, and that the father alone could not be ſo, and yet, by the ſentence of the judges, the father alone was condemned to ſuffer.

The motive upon which this ſentence was paſſed, was as unaccountable as all the reſt of the proceeding. Thoſe judges who had given  
their



their opinion for the execution of John Calas, persuaded the others, that this poor old man, unable to support the torments, would, when upon the wheel, make a full confession of his own guilt, and that of his accomplices: but how wretchedly were they confounded, when yielding up his breath upon that instrument of execution, he called God as a witness of his innocence, and besought him to forgive his judges!

They were afterwards obliged to pass a second decree, which contradicted the first, namely, to set at liberty the mother, her son Peter, young Lavaisse, and the maid-servant; but one of the counsellors having made them sensible that this latter decree contradicted the other, and that they condemned themselves, inasmuch, as it having been proved that all the accused parties had been constantly together during the whole time the murder was supposed to be committed, the setting at liberty the survivors was an incontestible proof of the innocence of the master of the family whom they had ordered to be executed; upon this, it was determined to banish Peter Calas the son, which was an act as ill-grounded and absurd as any of the rest; for Peter Calas was either guilty or not guilty of  
the



the murder : if he was guilty, he ought to have suffered in the same manner as his father ; if he was innocent, there was no reason for banishing him. But the judges, frightened with the sufferings of the father, and with that affecting piety with which he had resigned his life, thought to preserve their characters by making people believe, that they shewed mercy to the son ; as if this was not a new degree of prevarication, and that, thinking no bad consequences could arise from banishing this young man, who was poor and destitute of friends, was not a very great additional act of injustice, after that which they had been already so unfortunate to commit.

They now began to go to work with Peter Calas in his confinement, threatening to treat him as they had done his father, if he would not abjure his religion. This the young man has declared upon oath, as follows :

“ A Dominican friar came to me to my cell,  
 “ and threatened me with the same kind of  
 “ death if I did not abjure ; this I attest before  
 “ God this 23d day of July, 1762.”

PETER CALAS.

As

As Peter was going out of the town, he was met by one of the abbe's with a converting spirit, who made him return back to Toulouse, where he was shut up in a convent of Dominicans, and there compelled to perform all the functions of a convert to the catholic religion; this was in part what his persecutors aimed at, it was the price of his father's blood, and due atonement now seemed to be made to the religion, of which they looked upon themselves as the avengers.

The daughters were next taken from their mother, and shut up in a convent. This unhappy woman, who had been, as it were, sprinkled with the blood of her husband, who had held her eldest son lifeless within her arms, had seen the other banished, her daughters taken from her, herself stript of her effects, and left alone in the wide world destitute of bread, and bereft of hopes, was almost weighed down to the grave with the excess of her misfortunes. Some certain persons who had maturely weighed all the circumstances of this horrible adventure, were so struck with them, that they pressed Mrs. Calas, who now led a life of retirement and solitude, to exert herself, and go and demand justice at the foot of the throne. At this time

time she was scarcely able to drag about the remains of a miserable life; besides, having been born in England, and brought over to a distant province in France when very young, the very name of the city of Paris frightened her. She imagined, that in the capital of the kingdom, they must be still more cruel than at Toulouse: at length, however, the duty of revenging the death of her husband, got the better of her weakness. She set out for Paris, arrived there half dead; and was surprised to find herself received with tenderness, sympathy, and offers of assistance.

At Paris reason always triumphs over enthusiasm, however great; whereas in the more distant provinces of the kingdom, enthusiasm almost always triumphs over reason.

Mr. De Beaumont, a famous lawyer of the parliament of Paris, immediately took her cause in hand, and drew up an opinion, which was signed by fifteen other lawyers. Mr. Loiseau, equally famous for his eloquence, likewise drew up a memorial in favour of this unhappy family; and Mr. Mariette, solicitor to the council, drew up a formal state of the case, which struck every one who read it with conviction.

These



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These three noble defenders of the laws and of innocence, made the widow a present of all the profits arising from the publication of these pieces \*; which filled not only Paris but all Europe with pity for this unfortunate woman, and every one cried aloud for justice to be done her. In a word, the public passed sentence on this affair, long before it was determined by the council.

The soft infection made its way even to the cabinet, notwithstanding the continual round of business, which often excludes pity, and the constant habitude of beholding miserable objects, which too frequently steels the heart of the statesman against the cries of distress. The daughters were restored to their disconsolate mother, and all three in deep mourning,

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\* It is necessary for the English reader to understand, that in Paris it is customary for the great lawyers or counsellors employed in any remarkable case, to publish their pleadings on each side. On this occasion however, our author observes, " That these publications were pirated in several towns, by which Mrs. Calas lost the advantage that was intended her by this act of generosity."

honour



and bathed in tears, drew a sympathetic flood from the eyes of their judges before whom they prostrated themselves in thankful acknowledgements.

Nevertheless, this family had still some enemies to encounter; for it is to be considered, that this was an affair of religion. Several persons, whom in France we call *devots* \*, declared publicly, that it was much better to suffer an old Calvinist, though innocent, to be broken alive upon the wheel, than to expose eight counsellors of Languedoc to the mortification of being obliged to own, that they had been mistaken: nay, these people made use of this very expression; “That there were more “magistrates than Calas’s:” by which it should seem they inferred, that the Calas family ought to be sacrificed to the honour of the magistracy. Alas! they never reflected, that the

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\* *Dérot*, or as we call it in English *devotee*, comes from the Latin word *devotus*. The *devoti* of ancient Rome were such persons who devoted themselves to death for the safety or good of the republic; as the Curtii and Decii.

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honour of a judge, like that of another man, consists in making reparation for the faults he may have committed.

In France no one believes that the pope, even when assisted by his cardinals, is infallible: ought they then to have believed that eight judges of Toulouse were so? Every sensible and disinterested person did without scruple declare, that the decree of the court of justice of Toulouse, would be looked upon as void by all Europe, even though particular considerations might prevent it from being declared so by the council.

Such was the state of this surprising affair, when it occasioned certain impartial, but sensible persons, to form the design of laying before the public a few reflections upon toleration, indulgence, and commiseration, which the abbe Houteville in his bombastic and declamatory work, which is false in all the facts, calls a *monstrous doctrine*, but which reason calls the portion of human nature.

Either the judges of Toulouse, carried away by popular enthusiasm, caused the innocent master of a family to be put to a painful and ignominious

minious death, a thing which is without example; or this master of a family and his wife murdered their eldest son, with the assistance of another son and a friend, which is altogether out of nature. In either case, the most holy of all religions has been perverted to the production of an enormous crime. It is therefore the interest of mankind to examine how far charity or cruelty is consistent with true religion.

C H A P.

## - C H A P. II.

## Consequences of the Execution of JOHN CALAS.

**I**F the order of White Penitentiaries had been the cause of the punishment of an innocent person, and of the utter ruin and dispersion of a whole family, and of branding them with that ignominy which is annexed to those who suffer, when it ought properly to fall only upon those who pass an unjust sentence; if the frantic hurry of these penitentiaries in celebrating as a saint, one whom they ought to have treated as a self-murderer, brought a virtuous, an innocent fellow citizen to the scaffold; surely, this fatal mistake ought to make them true penitents for the rest of their lives; and both them and the judges ought to have their eyes continually filled with tears, without wearing a white cloak, or a mask on their face to hide those tears. We have a proper respect for all religious orders; they are edifying; but will all the good they have ever been able to do the state, compensate for the shocking disaster of which they had been the cause? Their institution seems to have been the work of that

zeal



zeal which animates the catholics of Languedoc against those we call Hugonots. One would be tempted to imagine, that they had made a vow to hate their brethren; and that, tho' men have religion enough to hate and persecute, they have not to love and cherish each other. But what would be the case, if these orders were governed by enthusiastic superiors, as were certain congregations, among whom, to use the words of one of our most eloquent and learned magistrates, the custom of seeing visions was reduced into an art and system? Or, that their convents had in them those dark rooms, called meditation rooms, which were filled with pictures of frightful devils, armed with long horns and talons, flaming gulphs, crosses, and daggers, with the holy name of Jesus in a scroll over them? Edifying spectacles, doubtless, for eyes already blinded with fanaticism, and for imaginations no less filled with mistaken zeal, than with abject submission to the will of their directors!

There have been times, and we know it but too well, in which religious orders have been dangerous to the state. The Frérots and the Flagellants have excited troubles in the kingdom. The league owed its origin to such associations.

fociations. But wherefore should any set of men thus distinguish themselves from the rest of their fellow-citizens? Is it that they think themselves more perfect? If so, it is offering an insult to the rest of the community: or are they desirous that every christian should become a member of their society? Truly, it would be a curious sight to see all the inhabitants of Europe in long hoods and masks, with two little round holes to peep through! Or, lastly, do they seriously think, that this dress is more acceptable to God than the coats and waistcoats we usually wear? No, no, there is something more at the bottom; this habit is a kind of controversial uniform, a signal for those of a contrary opinion to stand upon their guard; and might in time kindle a kind of civil war in our minds, that would terminate in the most terrible consequences, was not the wisdom of the king and of his ministers as great as the folly of these fanatics.

Every one is sufficiently sensible what fatal effects have arisen, since christians have begun to dispute among themselves concerning modes of belief; the blood of the subject has flown in torrents either on the scaffold or in the field,  
from

from the fourth century to the present time. But let us confine ourselves only to the wars and disasters which the disputes concerning reformation have excited in France, and examine into their source. Perhaps a short and faithful portrait of these numberless calamities, may open the eyes of some who have not had the advantage of education, and touch those hearts which are not by nature callous.



## C H A P. III.

## A SKETCH of the REFORMATION in the Sixteenth Century.

**W**HEN learning began to revive, and the understandings of mankind became more enlightened, there was a general complaint of errors and abuses; and every one acknowledged the complaint to be just.

Pope Alexander VI. made a public purchase of the pontifical crown, and his five bastards shared with him the profits. His son, the cardinal duke of Borgia, in concert with the pope his father, caused the noble families of Vitelli, Urbino, Gravina, and Olivaretto, together with an hundred other lords, to be made away with, in order to seize upon their estates. Julius II. full of the same spirit, excommunicated Lewis the Twelfth of France, while he himself, armed cap-a-pée, ravaged a part of Italy with fire and sword. Leo X. in order to raise money to pay the expences of his pleasures, made a sale of indulgences, like goods in a common market. Those who opposed such shameful



ful impositions, were certainly right in a moral view; let us see how far they were so with regard to us, in a political one.

They asserted, that as Jesus Christ had never exacted annates, nor reversions, nor sold dispensations for this world, nor indulgences for the next, they saw no reason why they should pay a foreign prince his price for these things. Supposing that the annates, the law proceedings in the pope's court, and the dispensations which still subsist, were to cost us no more than five hundred thousand crowns a year; it is clear, that since the time of Francis I. that is, in two hundred and fifty years, we have paid a hundred and twenty millions; and if we calculate the different value of the mark of silver, we shall find this sum to amount to about two hundred and fifty millions of the present money. It may therefore, I think, without any blasphemy be allowed, that the heretics in proposing the abolition of these very extraordinary taxes, which will be the admiration of posterity, did, in that respect, no great injury to the kingdom, and showed themselves rather good calculators than bad subjects. Add to this, that they were the only persons who understood the Greek

language, or had any knowledge of antiquity; let us us own likewise, without dissimulation, that with all their errors, we are indebted to them for the opening of our understandings, which had been long buried beneath the most barbarous obscurity.

But as they denied the doctrine of purgatory, concerning which no one ought to have the least doubt, and which, moreover, brought in a comfortable revenue to the monks; as they paid no reverence to relics which every one ought to reverence, and which brought in still greater profits; and lastly, as they attacked the most respectable tenets \*, their adversaries made

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\* They revived the opinion of Berengarius concerning the Eucharist; they denied that a body can exist in a thousand different places at one time, even by all the exertion of divine omnipotence; they also denied, that attributes can subsist without a subject; they held, that it was absolutely impossible that what appears to be simple bread and wine to the sight, the taste, and the stomach, can in the very instant of its existence, be annihilated or changed into another substance: in a word, they maintained all those errors for which Berengarius was

them no other reply, than by committing them to the stake. The king, who stiled himself

was formerly condemned. They founded their belief on several passages of the antient fathers of the church, and particularly of St. Justin, who says expressly in his dialogue against Typhonius, "That the offering of fine flour is the figure of the Eucharist, which Christ has ordered us to make in commemoration of his passion;"

"καὶ ἡ τῆς σπευδαλίας, &c. τύπος ἢ τῷ ἄρτῳ τῆς εὐχαριστίας, ὃν εἰς ἀνάμνησιν τοῦ παθούσης, &c. Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν παρέδωκε ποιεῖν."

They revived all that had been advanced in the first ages against the worship of relics, and brought these words of Vigilantius for their authority: "What necessity is there for your paying adoration or even respect to a mass of vile dust? Can it be supposed that the souls of deceased martyrs retain after their death an affection for their ashes? The customs of the antient idolaters are now introduced into the church; we begin to light tapers at noon-day; we may, indeed, during our life-time, mutually pray for each other; but of what service can such prayers be after death?"



their protector, and who kept a body of them in pay in Germany, marched at the head of a procession through Paris, which was concluded by the execution of a number of these unhappy wretches ; which was as follows :

They were suspended at the end of a long beam, which played upon a pole erected for that purpose; and underneath them was kindled a large fire, into which they were alternately lowered, and then raised up again, by which they experienced the most excruciating torments ; till a lingering death at last put a period to the longest and most dreadful punishment that cruelty ever invented.

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But they did not take notice how warmly St. Jerom has opposed this passage in *Vigilantius*. In short, they referred wholly to the primitive times of the apostles, nor could they be brought to acknowledge, that as the church became more extended and strengthened, there was a necessity for extending and strengthening its discipline likewise; they condemned every thing that had the appearance of riches or grandeur in religion, which, however, seem absolutely necessary towards supporting the dignity of that worship we pay the Deity.



A short time before the death of Francis I. the members of the parliament of Provence, whom the clergy had incensed against the inhabitants of Mirandol and Cabrière, applied to the king for a body of troops to attend the execution of nineteen persons of that country who had been condemned by them ; with the assistance of this armed force, they massacred about six thousand souls, without sparing sex or age, and reduced thirty villages to ashes. The people who were the objects of these executions, and who had, till then, been in a manner unknown, were doubtless to blame for having been born Vaudois ; but this was their only crime. They had been settled for upwards of three hundred years in deserts and on mountains, which they had rendered fertile by incredible labour, and led a pastoral and quiet life, the perfect image of the innocence which we find attributed to the first ages of the world. They had no other acquaintance with the towns or villages round about them, but from carrying the produce of their grounds thither to sell. Totally ignorant of all military operations, they made no defence ; but were slaughtered like timorous animals, whom we

drive into a net, and then knock them on the head \*.

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\* The candid and venerable president De Thon expresses himself thus concerning the innocent and unfortunate persons : “ Homines esse qui tre-  
 “ centis circiter abhinc annis asperum & incultum  
 “ solum vectigale à dominis acceperint, quod im-  
 “ probò labore & assiduo cultu frugum ferax &  
 “ aptum pecori reddiderint ; patientissimos eos  
 “ laboris & inediae, à litibus abhorrentes, erga  
 “ egenos munificos, tributa principi & sua jura  
 “ dominis fedulò & summa fide pendere ; Dei cul-  
 “ tum assiduís precibus & morum innocentiam præ  
 “ se ferre, ceterum rarò divorum templa adire, nisi  
 “ si quando ad vicina suis finibus oppida mercandi  
 “ aut negotiorum causa divertant ; quò si quando-  
 “ que pedem inferant, non dei, divorumque statuis  
 “ advolvi, nec cereos eis aut donaria ulla ponere ;  
 “ non sacerdotes ab eis rogari ut pro se, aut pro-  
 “ pinquorum manibus rem divinam faciant, non  
 “ cruce frontem insigniri uti aliorum moris est :  
 “ cùm cælum intonant non se lustrali aqua asper-  
 “ gere, sed sublatis in cælum oculis dei opem im-  
 “ plorare ; non religionis ergo peregrè proficisci,  
 “ non per vias antè crucium simulacra caput ape-  
 “ rire ; sacra alio ritu, & populari lingua cele-  
 brare ;

After the death of Francis I. a prince, whom it must be confessed, was more remarkable for his gallantries and his misfortunes than for his cruelty, the execution of a thousand heretics, and in particular that of Dubourg, a counsellor of the parliament, together with the massacre of Vassy, made the persecuted fly to arms. Their sect multiplied in proportion with the fires lighted for them, and the swords of executioners drawn against them, patience gave way to rage, and they followed the ex-

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“ brare; non denique Pontifici aut Episcopis honorem deferre, sed quosdam è suo numero delectos pro antistitibus & doctoribus habere. Hæc uti ad Franciscum relata VI.” Id. Feb. anni &c.

Madame de Cental, who was proprietor of part of the lands thus laid waste and drenched in the blood of their quondam inhabitants, applied for redress to Henry II. who referred her to the parliament of Paris. The solicitor-general of Provence, whose name was Guerin, and had been the principal author of the massacres, was condemned to lose his head; and was the only one who suffered on this occasion, the punishment due to the other accomplices in his guilt; because, says De Thou, *aulicorum favore destitueretur*, he had not friends at court.



ample of their enemies in cruelty. Nine civil wars filled France with carnage; and a peace, more fatal than war itself, produced the day of St. Bartholomew, which stands without example in the annals of crimes.

Henry III. and Henry IV. fell victims to the league; the one by the hand of a Dominican friar, and the other by that of a monster who had been a brother of the Mendicant order. There are who pretend, that humanity, indulgence, and liberty of conscience, are horrible things; I would ask such persons seriously, if they could have produced calamities comparable to those I have just related?

HAP.



## CHAP. IV.

Whether TOLERATION is dangerous; and among what Nations it is practised.

SOME people will have it, that if we were to make use of humanity and indulgence towards our mistaken brethren who pray to God in bad French, it would be putting arms into their hands, and we should see revived the bloody days of Jarnac, Moncontour, Coutras, Dreux, St. Denis, &c. I know not how this may be, as I have not the gift of prophecy; but I really cannot discover the congruity of this reasoning, "That because these men took up arms against me when I oppressed them, they will do the same if I shew them favour."

And here I would willingly take the liberty to intreat those who have the reins of government in hand, or are destined to fill the highest stations, for once to examine maturely, whether there is any reason to apprehend, that indulgence would occasion the same rebellions as cruelty and oppression; and whether, what has happened under certain circumstances, would happen under others of a different nature; or whether

whether times, opinions, and manners are always the same?

The Hugonots, it cannot be denied, have formerly given into all the rage of enthusiasm, and have been polluted with blood as well as ourselves: but can it be said, that the present generation is as barbarous as the former? Have not time and reason, that have lately made so great progress, together with good books, and that natural softness introduced from society, found their way among those who have the guidance of these people? And do we not clearly perceive that almost all Europe has undergone a change within the last century?

The hands of government have every where been strengthened, while the minds of the people have been softened and civilized; the general police, supported by numerous standing armies, leave us no longer any cause to fear the return of those times of anarchy, when protestant boors and catholic peasants were hastily called together from the labours of agriculture, to wield the sword against each others lives.

*Alia tempora, alia curæ.* It would be highly absurd in the present days to decimate the  
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body of the Sorbonne, because it formerly petitioned for the burning the *Pucelle d'Orleans*; because it declared Henry III. to have lost his right to the throne, and because it excommunicated and proscribed the illustrious Henry IV. We should not certainly think of prosecuting the other public bodies of the nation, who committed the like excesses in those times of error and madness; it would not only be very unjust, but as ridiculous as if we were to oblige all the inhabitants of Marseilles to undergo a course of physic, because they had the plague in 1720.

Should we at present go and sack Rome, as the troops of Charles the Fifth did, because pope Sixtus the Fifth, in the year 1585, granted a nine years indulgence to all Frenchmen who would take up arms against their sovereign? No, surely it is enough, if we prevent the court of Rome from ever being guilty of such excesses for the future.

The rage inspired by a spirit of controversy, and the abuse made of the Christian religion from want of properly understanding it, has occasioned as much bloodshed, and produced as many calamities in Germany, England, and even



even in Holland, as in France; and yet, at present, the difference in religion occasions no disturbances in those countries: but the Jew, the Catholic, the Lutheran, the Calvinist, the Anabaptist, the Socinian, the Moravian, and a multitude of other sects, live in brotherly harmony together, and contribute equally to the good of society.

In Holland, they no longer fear that the disputations of a Gomar \* concerning predestination, should bring the head of a grand pensionary to the block: nor in London, that the quarrels between the Presbyterians and the Episcopalists about a form of prayer and a surplice, should again spill the blood of their kings upon

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\* Francis Gomar was a protestant divine; he maintained, in contradiction to Arminius his colleague, that God has, from all eternity, predestinated the greatest part of mankind to burn in everlasting flames: this infernal doctrine was supported in the manner most suitable to it, by persecution. The grand pensionary Barneveldt, who was of the party which opposed Gomar, was beheaded on the 13th of May, 1619, at the age of seventy-two, *for having* (saith his sentence) *used his uttermost endeavours to vex the church of God.*

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a scaffold †. Ireland, now populous and rich, will not any more behold its catholic inhabitants

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† A pompous writer, in his apology for the revocation of the edict of Nantes, speaking of England, has these words: "These were the natural fruits of a false religion; there remained only one to be brought to perfection, which these islanders, justly the contempt of all nations, have cherished, and adopted to themselves." Certainly this author has been a little unfortunate in chusing his time for representing the English as a people despicable and despised by all the world: for surely, when a nation gives the most signal proofs of its bravery and generosity, and when its victorious ensigns wave in the four parts of the world, no great credit is to be given to the writer who shall represent it as contemptible and contemned. But we must observe, that it is in a chapter in favour of persecution, that we meet with this extraordinary passage; and none but such who preach up persecution can write thus. This detestable book, which seems the work of a madman, was composed by a person who has no ecclesiastical cure; for what real pastor would write in such a manner? The author has even carried his enthusiastic fury to such a length, as to justify the massacre of St. Bartholomew. It might be supposed that a production full of such shocking paradoxes, would

sacrificing, as an acceptable offering, the lives of their protestant brethren, by burying them alive, hanging up mothers upon gibbets, and tying their daughters round their necks to see them expire together; ripping up women with child, taking the half-formed infants from the womb, and throwing them to swine or dogs to be devoured; putting a dagger into the hands of their manacled prisoners, and forcing them to plunge it into the breasts of their fathers, their mothers, their wives, or children, thereby hoping to make them guilty of parricide, and damn their souls while they destroyed their bodies: all which we find related by Rapin, who served as an officer in the English service in Ireland, and who lived very near the time of those transactions, and confirmed by most of the English historians. No! such cruelties, as they, were never to be paralleled, so they doubtless will never be imitated. Philosophy, the sister of Religion, has herself snatched the poignard from the hands of Superstition, so long bathed in blood; and the human understanding,

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would be in the hands of almost every one, were it only on account of its singularity, and yet it seems to be hardly known.

recovered from its delirium, stands amazed at the shocking brutalities into which it has been hurried by enthusiasm.

We ourselves know, that in France there is a rich and populous province, where the protestant religion prevails much more than that of the church of Rome. The university of Alsace consists almost entirely of Lutherans, and they are likewise in possession of most of the civil posts in that province; and yet the public peace has never once been disturbed by any quarrels about religion, since that province has belonged to our kings. And what is the reason? Because no one is persecuted there on account of their religion. Seek not to lay a restraint upon the mind, and you may always be sure that the mind will be yours,

I do not mean by this to insinuate, that those who are of a different faith to the prince under whose government they live, should have an equal share in the places of profits and honour, with those who are of the established religion of the state. In England, the Roman catholics, who are in general looked upon to be friends to the Pretender, are excluded from all civil employs, and are even double taxed; but then,  
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in every other respect, they enjoy the prerogative of citizens.

Some of our bishops in France have been suspected of thinking that their honour and interest is concerned, in not suffering any protestants within their diocese, and that this is the principal obstacle to allowing of toleration amongst us; but this I cannot believe. The episcopal body in France is composed of persons of quality, who think and act in a manner suitable to their high birth; and as Envy itself must confess that they are both generous and charitable, they therefore certainly cannot think that those whom they thus drive out of their diocese, would become converts in any other country, but great honour would redound from the conversion of them at home; nor would the prelate be any loser by it in his temporals, seeing, that the greater the number of the inhabitants, the greater is the value of the land.

A certain Polish bishop had a farmer, who was an Anabaptist; and a receiver of his rents, who was a Socinian. Some person proposed to the bishop to prosecute the latter in the spiritual court, for not believing in transubstantiation, and to turn the other out of his farm, because

cause he would not have his son christened till he was fifteen years of age ; the prelate very prudently replied, That though he made no doubt of their being eternally damned in the next world, yet he found them extremely necessary to him in this.

Let us now for a while quit our own little sphere, and take a survey of the rest of the globe. The grand seignior peaceably rules over subjects of twenty different religions ; upwards of two hundred thousand Greeks live unmolested within the walls of Constantinople ; the Mufti himself nominates the Greek patriarch, and presents him to the emperor ; and, at the same time, allows of the residence of a Latin patriarch. The sultan appoints Latin bishops for some of the Greek isles ; the form used on this occasion is as follows † : “ I command such a one to go  
“ and reside as bishop in the isle of Chios, according to the antient custom and idle ceremonies of those people.” The Othman empire swarms with Jacobines, Nestorians, Monothelites, Cophti, Christians of St. John, Guebres, and Banians ; and the Turkish annals do

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† See Ricaut.

not furnish us with one single instance of a rebellion occasioned by any of these different sects.

Go into India, Persia, and Tartary, and you will meet with the same toleration and the same tranquility. Peter the Great encouraged all kinds of religions throughout his vast empire : trade and agriculture have been gainers by it, and no injury ever happened therefrom to the body politic.

We do not find that the Chinese government, during the course of four thousand years that it has subsisted, has ever adopted any other religion than that of the Noachides, which consists in the simple worship of one God ; and yet it tolerates the superstitions of Fo, and that of a multitude of bonzes ; which might be productive of dangerous consequences, did not the wisdom of the tribunals keep them within proper bounds.

It is true, that the great Yong-T-Chin, the most wise and magnanimous of all the emperors of China, drove the jesuits out of his kingdom ; but this was not because that prince himself was non-tolerant, but, on the contrary, because the jesuits were so.

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They themselves, in their letters, have given us the speech the emperor made to them on that occasion: "I know, says he, that your religion admits not of toleration; I know how you have behaved in the Manillas and at Japan; you deceived my father, but think not to deceive me in the same manner." And if we read the whole of the conversation which he deigned to hold with them, we must confess him to be the wisest and most clement of all princes. How could he indeed, with any consistency, keep in his kingdom European philosophers, who, under the pretence of teaching the use of thermometers and œolypiles, had found means to debauch a prince of the blood? But what would this emperor have said, had he read our histories, and had he been acquainted with the times of the league and the gunpowder plot?

It was sufficient for him to be informed of the outrageous and indecent disputes between those Jesuits, Dominicans, Capuchins, and secular priests, who were sent as missionaries into his dominions from one extremity of the globe to preach up truth; instead of which, they employed their time in mutually pronouncing damnation against each other. The emperor, then,

then, did no more than send away a set of foreigners, who were disturbers of the public peace. But with what infinite goodness did he dismiss them! and with what paternal care did he provide for their accommodation in their journey, and to prevent their meeting with any insult on their way! This very act of banishment might serve as an example of toleration and humanity.

† The Japonese were the most tolerant of all nations; twelve different religions were peaceably established in their empire: when the Jesuits came, they made the thirteenth; and, in a very little time after their arrival, they would not suffer any other but their own. Every one knows the consequence of these proceedings: a civil war, as calamitous as that of the league, soon spread destruction and carnage through the empire; till at length the Christian religion was itself swallowed up in the torrents of blood it had set a flowing, and the Japonese for ever shut the entrance of their country against all foreigners, looking upon us as no better than savage beasts, such as those

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† See Kempfer, and all the accounts of Japan.

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from which the English have happily cleared their island. Colbert, the minister, who knew the necessity we were in of the commodities of Japan, that wants nothing from us, laboured in vain to settle a trade with that empire; he found those people inflexible.

Thus then every thing on our continent shows us, that we ought neither to preach up, nor to exercise non-toleration.

Let us now cast our eyes on the other hemisphere. Behold Carolina! whose laws were framed by the wise Locke; there every master of a family, who has only seven souls under his roof, may establish what religion he pleases, provided all those seven persons concur with him therein; and yet this great indulgence has not, hitherto, been the occasion of any disorders. God forbid, that I should mention this as an example to every master of a family to set up a particular worship in his house: I have only introduced it to shew, that the utmost lengths to which toleration can be carried, have never yet given rise even to the slightest dissensions.

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And what shall we say of those pacific primitive Christians, who have, by way of derision, been called Quakers; and who, though some of their customs may perhaps be ridiculous, are yet remarkable for the virtue and sobriety of their lives, and for having in vain endeavoured to preach peace and good-will to the rest of mankind? There are at least an hundred thousand of them in Pensylvania; discord and controversy are unknown in that happy spot where they are settled: the very name of their principal city, Philadelphia, is a continual memento to them, that all men are brethren, and is at once an example and reproach to those nations who have not yet adopted toleration.

To conclude, toleration has never yet excited civil wars; whereas its opposite has filled the earth with slaughter and desolation. Let any one judge, which of the two is most entitled to our esteem, or which we should applaud, the mother who would deliver her son into the hand of the executioner, or she who would resign all right to him to save his life.

In all what I have said, I have had only the interest of nations in view, and, as I pay all due respect to the doctrines of the church, I have in  
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this article, only considered the physical and moral advantages of society. I therefore hope, that every impartial reader will properly weigh these truths, that he will view them in their proper light, and rectify what may be amiss. Those who read with attention, and reciprocally communicate their thoughts, will always have the start of the author †.

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† Mr. de la Bourdonnaie, intendant of Rouen, says, that the manufacture for hats at Coudebec and Neufchatel is greatly fallen off since the refugees left that country. Mr. Foucaut, intendant of Caen, says, that trade in general is declined through the whole generality; and Mr. de Maupeou, intendant of Poitiers, that the manufactures for druggets is quite lost. Mr. de Bezons complains, that there is now hardly any trade stirring at Clerac and Nerac. Mr. Miroménil, intendant of Tourain, says, that the trade of Tours is diminished near ten millions per annum, and all this through the persecution raised in that part of the kingdom: *See the memorials of the intendants in the year 1698.* To this if we add the number of land and sea officers, and common sailors, who have been forced to engage in foreign services, frequently with fatal consequences to their own

country : we shall then see whether or no persecution has been fatal to the state.

We will not here presume to offer any hints to those ministers, whose conduct and capacity are sufficiently known, and whose greatness of soul and nobleness of sentiment do honour to their illustrious birth: they will of themselves readily perceive, that the restoration of our marine will require some indulgence at least to be shewn to the inhabitants of our sea-coasts.

CHAP.



## C H A P. V.

In what Cases TOLERATION may be admitted.

**L**ET me for once suppose, that a minister equally noble and discerning, that a prelate equally wise and humane, or a prince who is sensible that his interest consists in the increased number of his subjects, and his glory in their happiness, may deign to cast their eyes on this random and defective production. In this case, his own consummate knowledge will naturally lead him to ask himself, what hazard shall I run by seeing the land beautified and enriched by a greater number of industrious labourers, the aids augmented, and the state rendered more flourishing?

Germany, by this time, would have been a desert, covered with the unburied bodies of many different sects, slaughtered by each other, had not the peace of Westphalia happily procured a liberty of conscience.

We have Jews at Bourdeaux, at Mentz, and in Alface; we have Lutherans, Molinists, and Janfenists amongst us; can we not then admit protestants likewise under proper restrictions, nearly like those under which the Roman catholics are permitted in England? The greater the number of different sects, the less danger is to be apprehended from any one in particular; they become weaker in proportion as they are more numerous, and are easily kept in subjection by those just laws which prohibit riotous assemblies, mutual insults, and seditions, and which the legislative power will always properly support in their full vigour.

We know that there are several heads of families, who have acquired great fortunes in foreign countries, who would be glad to return to their native country. These require only the protection of the law of nature, to have their marriages to remain valid, and their children secured in the enjoyment of their present property, and the right of succeeding to the inheritance of their fathers, together with a protection for their persons. They ask no public places of worship; they aim not at the possession of civil employs, nor do they aspire to dignities either in church or state; for no Roman

man catholics can enjoy any of these, either in England or in any other protestant country. In this case, therefore, there is no occasion for granting great privileges, or delivering strong holds into the hands of a faction, but only to suffer a quiet set of people to breathe their native air; to soften the rigour of some edicts, which in former times might perhaps have been necessary, but at present are no longer so. It is not for us to direct the ministry what it has to do; it is sufficient, if we presume to plead the cause of an unfortunate and distressed people.

Many and easy are the methods to render these people useful to the state, and to prevent them from ever becoming dangerous: the wisdom of the legislature, supported by the military force, will certainly find out these methods, which other nations have employed with so much success.

It is certain, that there is still a number of enthusiasts among the lower kind of Calvinists; but, on the other hand, it is no less certain, that there is still a greater number among the lower kind of bigotted Roman catholics. The dregs of the madmen of St. Medard are passed



over unnoticed in the nation, while the greatest pains is taken to exterminate the Calvinist prophets. The most certain means to lessen the number of the mad of both sorts, if any still remain, is to leave them entirely to the care of reason, which will infallibly enlighten the understanding in the long run, though she may be slow in her operations. Reason goes mildly to work, she persuades with humanity, she inspires mutual indulgence and forbearance; she stifles the voice of discord, establishes the rule of virtue and sobriety, and disposes those to pay a ready obedience to the laws, who might start from the hand of power when exerted to enforce them. Besides, are we to hold for nothing that contempt and ridicule which enthusiasm every where meets with in the present enlightened age, from persons of rank and education? This very contempt is the most powerful barrier that can be opposed to the extravagancies of all sectaries. Past times are as though they never had been. We should always direct our views from the point where we ourselves at present are, and from that to which other nations have attained.

There has been a time, in which it was thought a duty to issue edicts against all such  
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who taught a doctrine contrary to the cathegories of Aristotle, or who opposed the abhorrence of a vacuum, quiddities, or the whole of the part of a thing. There are above an hundred volumes in Europe, containing the writings of civilians against magic, and the manner of distinguishing real forcerers from pretended ones. The excommunication of grasshoppers and other insects hurtful to the fruits of the earth, was formerly much in use, and is still to be found in several rituals; that custom is now laid aside and Aristotle, with his forcerers and the grasshoppers, are left to themselves. Innumerable are the examples of these grave follies, which formerly were deemed of great importance; others have succeeded from time to time, but as soon as they have had their effect, and people begin to grow weary of them, they pass away and are no more heard of. If any one was at present, to take it into their head to turn Eutichean, Nestorian, or Manichean, what would be the consequence? We should laugh at him in the same manner as at a person who should appear dressed after the antient fashion, with a great ruff and slashed sleeves.

The first thing that opened the eyes of our nation was, when the Jesuits Le Tellier and

Doucín drew up the bull *Unigenitus*, and sent it to the court of Rome, imagining they lived still in those times of ignorance, in which people adopted, without examination, the most absurd assertions. They even dared to proscribe a proposition, which is universally true in all cases and in all times, *viz.* “That the dread of an “unjust excommunication ought not to hinder “any one from doing his duty.” This was, in fact, proscribing reason, the liberties of the Gallican church, and the very foundation of all morality; it was saying to mankind, “God commands you never to do your duty, “when you are apprehensive of suffering “any injustice.” Never sure was so gross an insult offered to common sense, and yet this never occurred to these correspondents of the church of Rome. Nay, they even persuaded that court, that this bull was necessary, that the nation desired it. Accordingly it was signed, sealed, and sent back to France; and every one knows the consequences: assuredly, had they been foreseen, this bull would have been mitigated. Very warm disputes ensued upon it; but however, by the great prudence and goodness of the king, they were at length appeased.

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It is much the same with regard to most of those points, in which the protestants and us at present differ; some of them are of little or no consequence, others again are more serious; but even in these latter, the rage of disputation is so far subsided, that the protestants now-a-days, no longer preach upon controversial points in any of their churches.

Let us then seize this period of disgust or satiety for such matters, or rather, indeed, of the prevalence of reason, as an epocha for restoring the public tranquillity, of which it seems to be a pleasing earnest. Controversy, that epidemical malady is now in its decline, and requires nothing more than a gentle regimen. In a word, it is the interest of the state, that these wandering sects, who have so long lived as aliens to their father's house, on their returning in a submissive and peaceable manner, should meet with a favourable reception; humanity seems to demand this, reason advises it, and good policy can have nothing to apprehend from it.



## CHAP. VI.

If NON-TOLERATION is agreeable to the law  
of NATURE and of SOCIETY.

**T**HE law of nature is that which nature points out to all mankind. You have brought up a child, that child owes you a respect as its parent, and gratitude as its benefactor. You have a right over the productions of the earth which you have raised by the labour of your own hands; you have given and received a promise, that promise ought to be kept.

The law of society can have no other foundation in any case than on the law of nature. "Do not that to another which thou wouldest not he should do unto thee", is the great and universal principle of both throughout the earth: now, agreeable to this principle, can one man say to another, "Believe that which I believe, and which thou thyself can'st not believe, or thou shalt die?" And yet this is what is everyday said in Portugal, in Spain, and at Goa. In some other countries indeed, they now content themselves with saying, "Believe as I do, or I will hold thee in abhorrence; believe like me,

or

“ or I will do thee all the evil I can: wretch,  
“ thou art not of my religion, and therefore  
“ thou hast no religion at all, and oughtest to  
“ be held in execration by thy neighbours, thy  
“ city, and thy province.”

If the law of society directs such a conduct, the Japanese ought then to hold the Chinese in detestation; the latter the Siamese, who should persecute the inhabitants of the Ganges; and they fall upon those of India; the Mogul should put to death the first Malabar he found in his kingdom; the Malabar should poignard the Persian; the Persian massacre the Turk; and, altogether, should fall upon us Christians, who have so many ages been cutting one another's throats.

The law of persecution then is equally absurd and barbarous; it is the law of tygers: nay, it is even still more savage, for tygers destroy only for the sake of food, whereas we have butchered one another on account of a sentence or a paragraph.

## CHAP. VII.

If NON-TOLERATION was known among the  
GREEKS.

THE several nations with which history has made us in part acquainted, did all consider their different religions as ties by which they were united; it was the association of human kind. There was a kind of law of hospitality among the Gods, the same as amongst men. If a stranger arrived in any town, the first thing he did was to pay his adoration to the Gods of the country, even though they were the Gods of his enemies. The Trojans offered up prayers even to those Gods who fought for the Greeks.

Alexander made a journey into the deserts of Lybia, purposely to consult the God Ammon, to whom the Greeks gave the name of *Zeus*, and the Latins that of Jupiter, though both countries had their Jupiter and their *Zeus* amongst themselves. When they sat down before any town or city, they offered up sacrifices and prayers to the gods of that city or

town,

town, to render them propitious to their undertaking. Thus, even in the midst of war, religion united mankind; and though it might sometimes prompt them to exercise the most inhuman cruelties, at other times it frequently softened their fury.

I may be mistaken, but it appears to me, that not one of all the civilized nations of antiquity, ever laid a restraint upon liberty of thinking. They had all a particular religion; but they seemed to have acted in this respect towards men in the same manner as they did towards their Gods; they all acknowledged one supreme Being, though they associated with him an infinite number of inferior deities: in like manner, though they had but one faith, yet they admitted a multitude of particular systems.

The Greeks, for example, though a very religious people, were not offended with the Epicureans, who denied Providence and the existence of the soul; not to mention divers other sects, whose tenets were all of them repugnant to the pure ideas we ought to entertain of a Creator, and yet were all of them tolerated.



Socrates, who came the nearest to the knowledge of the true God, is said to have suffered on that account, and died a martyr to the Deity; he was the only one whom the Greeks ever put to death on account of opinion. If this was really the cause of his being condemned, it does very little honour to persecution, since he was put to death for being the only one who gave true glory to God, whilst those who taught notions the most unworthy of the Deity were held in high honour: therefore, I think, the enemies of toleration should be cautious how they lay a stress upon the infamous example of his judges.

Moreover, it is evident from history, that he fell a victim to the revenge of an enraged party. He had made himself many inveterate enemies of the sophists, orators, and poets, who taught in the public schools, and even of all the preceptors who had the care of the children of distinction. He himself acknowledges in his discourse handed down to us by Plato, that he went from house to house, to convince these preceptors, that they were a set of ignorant fellows; a conduct certainly unworthy of one who had been declared by an oracle the wisest  
of

of mankind. A priest, and one of the members of the Areopagus, were let loose upon him, who accused him I cannot precisely say of what, as his apology to me seems very vague; from which however we learn in general, that he was charged with inspiring the youth of the nation with notions contrary to the religion and government of the country: an accusation which the slanderers of all times and places have constantly made use of; but a court of justice requires positive facts, and that the charge should be circumstantial and well supported, none of which are to be found in the proceedings against Socrates. All we know is, that he had at first two hundred and twenty voices for him; therefore, there must have been two hundred and twenty out of the five hundred judges, who were philosophers; a great many more, I believe, than are to be found any where else. At length, however, the majority were for the hemlock potion. But here let us not forget, that when the Athenians came to their reason, they held both his accusers and judges in detestation; made Melitus, who had been the principal author of the sentence pronounced against him, pay for that act of injustice with his life; banished all the others that were concerned in it, and erected a temple to Socrates. Never  
was

was philosophy so nobly revenged, so highly honoured. This affair of Socrates then is, in fact, the most powerful argument that can be alledged against persecution. The Athenians had an altar dedicated to the strange Gods, Gods they could never know. What stronger proof then can there be, not only of their extreme indulgence towards all nations, but even for their respect for the religion of those nations?

A very worthy person, who is neither an enemy to reason, learning, or probity, nor to his country, in undertaking to justify the affair of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, quotes the war of the Phocians, by them called *the sacred war*, as if that war had been entered into on the score of religion, or a particular point in divinity; whereas it is well known, that it was caused by a dispute about a particular spot of ground, the constant cause of all wars. A few corn-grounds can certainly never be a symbol of belief; it is as certain, that none of the Greek cities ever made war upon each other from the sake of opinion. After all, what would this modest and humane writer drive at? Would he have us undertake a sacred war?

## CHAP. VIII.

## Whether the ROMANS encouraged TOLERATION.

**A**MONG the antient Romans, from the days of Romulus to those in which the Christians began to dispute with the priests of the empire, we do not find a single instance of any person being persecuted on account of his sentiments. Cicero doubted every thing; Lucretius denied every thing; and yet, neither one nor the other, underwent the least reproach from their fellow citizens: nay, so far did this licence go, that Pliny the naturalist begins his book by denying the existence of a God, and saying, That if there is one, it must be the sun. Cicero, in speaking of hell, says, *Non est unus tam excors quæ credat*. "There is not even an old woman so silly as to believe it." Juvenal says, *Nec pueri credunt*: "Even our children laugh at it." And the following maxim was publicly repeated on the Roman theatre: *Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil*: "nought after death, even death itself is nought." While we abhor those maxims, let us pardon them in a people, who were



were never enlightened by the holy truths of the gospel; and, while we own them to be false and impious, let us however confess, that the Romans were great friends to toleration, seeing that such tenets never excited any commotions.

*Deorum offensa diis curæ*, was the grand principle of the senate and people of Rome; that illustrious nation employing their attention wholly to conquer, govern, and civilize the universe. They were our legislators as well as our conquerors; and even Cæsar, who reduced us to his subjection, and gave us laws and games, never attempted to compel us to quit our Druids for him, though supreme pontiff of a nation, whose subjects we were now become.

The Romans themselves did not profess all kinds of religion, therefore they did not give public sanction to all, but they permitted them. Under Numa, nothing material was the object of their worship. They had neither statues nor pictures; in process of time, however, some were erected to the *Dii Majorum Gentium*, with which the Greeks brought them acquainted. That law in the twelve tables, *Deos peregrinos ne colunto*, was confined to the allowing

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no public worship to be paid, except to the superior and inferior deities, approved by the senate. The Egyptian goddess Isis had a temple in Rome to the time of Tiberius, who demolished it, because its priests, having been bribed by Mundus, suffered him to lie with a lady called Paulina in the temple itself, under the name and form of the God Anubis. Indeed this story is to be found only in Josephus, who did not live at that time; and was moreover a credulous and exaggerating writer: and there is very little probability, that in so enlightened an age as that of Tyberius, a lady of the first distinction in Rome, could be so weak to believe that a God cohabited with her.

But whether this anecdote be true or false, this one thing is certain, that the Egyptian idolatry was in the possession of a temple at Rome with the public consent. The jews had also lived as traders in that city ever since the Punic war; they had their synagogues there in the time of Augustus, and almost always continued to have them in the same manner as they now have in modern Rome. Can we desire a stronger instance, that the Romans looked upon tolera-

tion

tion as the most sacred of all the laws of nations?

We are told, that as soon as the Christian religion began to make its appearance, its followers were persecuted by these very Romans who persecuted no one. This fact, however, appears to me to be evidently false, and I desire no better authority than that of St. Paul himself. In the acts of the Apostles \*, we are told, that St. Paul being accused by the Jews, of attempting to overturn the Mosaic law by that of Jesus Christ, St. James proposed to him to shave his head, and go into the temple with four Jews, and purify himself with them, “That all men may know, says he, that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing, but that thou thyself doest keep the law of Moses.”

Accordingly, we find that St. Paul, though a Christian, submitted to perform these Jewish ceremonies for the space of seven days; but before the expiration of this time, the Jews of Asia, who knew him again, seeing him in the

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\* Chap. 21. 22.

temple, not only with Jews but Gentiles also, cried out, that he had polluted the holy place, and laid hands upon him, drew him out of the temple, and carried him before the governor Felix: they afterwards accused him at the judgment-seat of Festus, whither the Jews came in crowds demanding his death. But Festus answered them, “It is not the manner of the  
 “Romans to deliver any man to die, before  
 “that he which is accused have the accusers  
 “face to face, and have licence to answer for  
 “himself †.”

These words of the Roman magistrate are more remarkable, as he appears to have been no favourer of St. Paul, but rather to have held him in contempt, for imposed upon by the false lights of his own reason, he took him for a person besides himself; nay, he expressly says, to him, “Much learning hath made thee mad §.” Festus then, was entirely guided by the equity of the Roman law, in taking under his protection a stranger, for whom he could have no regard.

† Acts 25.

§ *ibid.* 26

Here



Here then we have the word of God itself declaring, that the Romans were a just people, and no persecutors. Besides, it was not the Romans who laid violent hands on St. Paul, but the Jews. St. James, the brother of Jesus, was stoned to death by order of a Sadducee Jew, and not by that of a Roman judge : it was the Jews alone who put St. Stephen to death † ; and though St. Paul held the clothes of those who stoned him, he certainly did not act then as a Roman citizen.

The primitive Christians had certainly no cause of complaint against the Romans ; the Jews, from whom they at that time began to

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† Though the power of life and death in criminal matters had been taken from the Jews after the banishment of Archelaus into the country of the Allobroges, and that Judea had been governed as a province ; nevertheless, the Romans frequently winked at the exertion of a judicial power by these people on any particular occasion that related merely to those of their own sect ; such as for instance, when in any sudden tumult, they out of zeal stoned to death the person whom they thought guilty of blasphemy.

sepa-

separate themselves, were their only enemies. Every one knows the implacable hatred all sectaries bear to those who quit their sect. There, doubtless, were several tumults in the synagogues at Rome. Suetonius, in his life of Claudius, has these words, *Judæos impulsure Christo assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit*. He is wrong in saying, that it was at the instigation of Christ they raised commotions in Rome; but he could not be acquainted with all the circumstances relating to a people who were held in such contempt at Rome as the Jews were: and, however mistaken he may have been in this particular, yet he is right as to the occasion of these commotions. Suetonius wrote in the reign of Adrian in the second century, when the Christians were not distinguished from the Jews by the Romans: therefore this passage of Suetonius is a proof, that the Romans, so far from oppressing the primitive Christians, chastised the Jews who persecuted them, being desirous that the Jewish synagogue at Rome should show the same indulgence to its dissenting brethren, as it received itself from the Roman senate: and we find from Dion Cassius and Ulpian, that the Jews who were thus banished from Rome,

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returned soon after, and even attained to several honours and dignities, notwithstanding the laws which excluded them therefrom †. Can it be believed, that after the destruction of Jerusalem, the emperors would have loaded the Jews with their favours, and have persecuted and put to death the Christians, whom they looked upon as a sect of the Jews?

Nero is said to have been a great persecutor of the Christians. But Tacitus tells us, that they were accused with having set fire to the city of Rome, and where thereupon given up to the resentment of the populace. But had religion any thing to do in this charge? No, certainly. We might as well say, that the Chinese, whom the Dutch murdered a few years ago in Batavia, were slaughtered on account of their religion? And nothing but a strong desire to deceive ourselves can possibly make us attribute to persecution the sufferings

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† Ulpianus l. tit. II. *Eis qui judaicam superstitionem sequuntur, honores adipisci permiserent, &c.*

of a few half-Jews and half-Christians under Nero †.

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† Tacitus's words are: *Quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Christianos appellabat.*

It is hardly probable that the name of Christian was already known in Rome; Tacitus wrote in the reigns of the emperors Vespasian and Domitian; and he speaks of the Christians in the manner that it was customary in his time. And here I must venture to assert, that the words *Odio humani generis convicti*, may equally well be rendered agreeable to the stile of this writer, *Convicted of being hated by mankind, as convicted of hating all mankind.*

And indeed, what was the employment of these first missionaries at Rome? They laboured to gain a few proselytes, by preaching up a pure and simple moral doctrine; the humility of their hearts, and the modesty of their manners, were equal to the lowliness of their condition and circumstances. Having been so lately separated from the Jews, they were hardly known in the world as a different sect; how then could they be hated by, or convicted



ed of hating all mankind, to whom they were in a manner unknown?

The Roman Catholics have been accused as the incendiaries of the city of London in the year 1666, but not till they had first occasioned civil wars on account of religion; and that several of that faith, though unworthy to be so, had been legally convicted of the Gunpowder-Plot.

But surely the case of the primitive Christians in the time of Nero was very different. It is no easy matter to clear up the obscurities of history. Even Tacitus himself says nothing that can afford a reason to suspect Nero of having set fire to Rome; and we might, with a greater appearance of probability, charge Charles II. with having lighted up the flames that laid London in ashes, in revenge for the blood of his father, that had been so lately shed upon the scaffold, to satisfy a rebellious people who thirsted for that blood. Charles had at least some excuse for such an action; whereas, Nero had neither excuse, pretence, or interest for the deed attributed to him. Reports of this kind have been common in every country among  
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the populace, and even our own times have furnished us with some equally false and ridiculous.

Tacitus, who was so well acquainted with the disposition of princes, could not have been a stranger to that of the common people, who are ever vain, inconstant, and violent in the opinions they adopt, incapable of discerning truth from falsehood, and ready to believe, assert, and forget every thing.

Philo says, " That Sejanus persecuted the Jews " under Tiberius, but that after the death of Sejanus, the emperor reinstated them in all their " privileges." One of which was, that of being denizens of Rome, notwithstanding the contempt they were held in by the Romans. As such they had a share in the distribution of corn, and whenever such distribution happened to be made on the day that was their sabbath, the portion allotted them was put by till the next day: this indulgence might probably be granted them in favour of the great sums of money with which they furnished the state; for they have purchased toleration in every country at a pretty high rate, though, it must be confessed, that they have soon found means to reimburse themselves.

This passage of Philo's clearly explains one in Tacitus, where he says, " That four thousand  
" Jews or Egyptians were banished to Sardinia,  
" where, if they had all perished, thro' the badness  
" of the climate, it would have been no great  
" loss." *Vile damnum.*

Before I close this note, I shall observe, that Philo speaks of Tiberius as a wise and just prince. I am very ready to believe that he was so, only where the being such was agreeable to his interest; but the good character given him here by Philo, makes me at the same time greatly suspect the truth of those terrible crimes, with which Tacitus and Suetonius reproach him. Nor can I think it likely, that an infirm old man of seventy, would have retired into the island of Caprea, to indulge himself in the uninterrupted exercise of a refined debauchery, which appears to be hardly natural, and was, even in those days of licentiousness, unknown to the most abandoned of the Roman youth. Neither Tacitus nor Suetonius were acquainted with that emperor; but took these stories upon the credit of vulgar reports; Octavius and Tiberius Cæsar, and their successors, had been justly detested for reigning over a free people without their consent. All historians have taken a delight in bespattering their characters, and the world has taken them

them upon their words for want of authentic memorials or chronicles in those times. Besides, as these writers do not quote any authority for what they advance, who could contradict them? They blackened whom they pleased, and wantonly directed the judgment of posterity. The wise and impartial reader will, however, readily perceive how far the veracity of historians is to be depended on, and what degree of credit is due to public facts attested by authors of reputation, born in a learned and enlightened nation, as well as what bounds to set to our belief of anecdotes, when related by these same authors, without any authority to support them.



## C H A P. IX.

## Of M A R T Y R S.

SEVERAL Christians afterwards suffered martyrdom ; it is not easy to say on what particular account they were condemned ; but I can venture to assert, that none suffered under the first Cæsars, merely on the account of religion, for they tolerated all beliefs ; therefore, why should they seek out and prosecute an obscure people, who had a worship peculiar to themselves, at the time they licensed all others ?

The emperors Titus, Trajan, Antoninus, and Decius, were not barbarians : how then can we imagine, that they would have deprived the Christians alone of that liberty, with which they indulged every other nation ; or, that they would even have troubled them for having concealed mysteries, while the worshippers of Isis, Mithra, and the Goddess of Assyria, whose rites were all of them equally unknown to the Romans, were suffered to perform them without hindrance ? Certainly, the persecutions the  
Christians

Christians suffered, must have arisen from other causes, and from some private pique, enforced by reasons of state.

For instance, when St. Laurence refused to deliver to Cornelius Secularius, the Roman prefect, the money belonging to the Christians which he had in his custody; was it not very natural for the prefect and the emperor to be incensed at this refusal? They did not know that St. Laurence had distributed this money among the poor, in acts of charity and benevolence; therefore they considered him only as a refractory person, and punished him accordingly\*.

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\* We most certainly have a proper deference for whatever the holy church has made the objects of our reverence; accordingly, we invoke the blessed martyrs: but at the same time that we pay St. Laurence all due respect, may we not be permitted to doubt that St. Sixtus said to him, "You will follow me in three days." That, during this short interval, the prefect of Rome made him demand a sum of money of the Christians; that Laurence had time to assemble all the poor people in that city; that he walked before the prefect, to

Again, let us consider the martyrdom of St. Polyeuctes. Can he be said to have suffered on account of religion only? He enters a temple, where the people are employed in offering thanksgivings to their Gods, on account of the victory gained by the emperor Decius; he insults the priests, and overturns and breaks in pieces the altar and statues; is there a country in the world where so gross an insult would have been passed over? The christian who publicly tore the edict of the emperor Dioclesian, and by that act brought on the great persecution against

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shew him the place where they were assembled; that he was afterwards tried and condemned to the torture; that the prefect ordered the smith to make a grid-iron large enough to broil a man upon; that the principal magistrate of Rome assisted in person at this strange execution; and lastly that St. Laurence, while upon the grid-iron, called out to him, "I am done enough on this side, let them turn me on the other, if you have a mind to eat me." This same grid-iron seems to have very little of the Roman genius in it; and besides, how happens it that we do not find a word of this story in any of the heathen writers?

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his brethren in the two last years of this prince's reign, had not, surely, a zeal according to knowledge, but was the unhappy cause of all the disasters that befel his party. This inconsiderate zeal, which was often breaking forth, and was condemned even by several of the fathers of the church, was probably the occasion of all those persecutions we read of.

Certainly, I would not make a comparison between the first sacramentarians and the primitive Christians; as error should never be ranked in the same class with truth: but it is well known, that Farrel, the predecessor of Calvin did the very same thing at Arles, which St. Polyeuctes had done before him in Armenia. The townsmen were carrying the statue of St. Anthony the hermit in procession through the streets; Farrel and some of his followers in a fit of zeal fell upon the monks who were carrying the image, beat them, made them take to their heels, and, having seized upon St. Anthony, threw him into the river. Assuredly Farrel deserved death for this flagrant outrage upon the public peace, but he had the good luck to escape by flight. Now, had he only told those monks in the open streets that he did



not believe that a raven had brought half a loaf to St. Anthony, nor that his hermit had had conversation with centaurs and satyrs, he would have deserved a severe reprimand for troubling the public peace; but if the night after the procession, he had quietly examined the story in his own room, no one could have found any fault with him for it.

But indeed can we suppose, that the Romans, after permitting the infamous Antinoüs to be ranked among their demi-gods, would have massacred and thrown to wild beasts those against whom they had no other cause of reproach, than having peaceably worshipped a just deity? Or, would those very Romans, who worshipped a supreme and all powerful God †, master of all

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† We have only to open Virgil to be convinced that the Romans acknowledged one Supreme Being, the lord and master of all other heavenly beings.

“ O! quis res hominumque deûmque  
 “ Æternis regis imperiis, & fulmine terres,  
 “ Opater, ô hominum divûmque æterna potestas, &c.

And

the subordinate deities, and distinguished by the title of *Deus optimus maximus* ; would they, I

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And Horace expresses himself still more strongly :

“ Unde nil majus generatur ipso,

“ Nec viget quidquam simile, aut secundum.”

In those mysteries into which almost all the Roman youth were initiated, nothing else was sung but the unity of God. See the noble hymn of Orpheus, and the letter of Maximus of Modarum to St. Augustin, in which he says, “ That none “ but fools can possibly deny a supreme Being.” Longinus, who was an heathen, writes also to St. Augustine, “ That God is one, incomprehensible “ ineffable.” Even Lactantius, who certainly cannot be charged with being too indulgent, acknowledges in his fifth book, “ That the Romans sub- “ jected all the other deities to the one supreme “ God;” *illos subjecit & mancipat Deo*. Tertullian also in his apology confesses, “ That the whole empire acknowledged one God, ruler of the world, “ and infinite in power and majesty :” *Principem mundi perfectæ potentiæ & majestatis*. Again, if we look into Plato, who taught Cicero his philosophy, we shall there find him thus express himself:

“ There

say, have persecuted such who professed to worship one only God ?

There appears little reason to believe that there ever was an inquisition erected against the Christians under the Roman emperors ; I mean, that they were ever judicially examined on the subject of their faith ; neither do we find, that Jew, Syrian, Egyptian bards, Druids, or philosophers, were ever troubled on this account. The primitive martyrs then, were men who opposed the worship of false gods. But, however wise or pious they might be in rejecting the belief of such absurd fictions ; if, not content with worshipping the true God in spirit and in truth, they offered a violent and public outrage to the received religion of the government under which they lived, however absurd that religion might be ; impartiality obliges us to confess, that they themselves were the first persecutors.

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“ There is but one God, whom we all ought to love and adore, and labour to resemble him in integrity and holiness.” Epictetus in a dungeon, and Mark Antoninus on a throne, tell us the same in a hundred different passages of their writings.

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Tertullian, in his apology †, says, that the Christians were looked upon as a turbulent and seditious sect. This accusation is doubtless unjust; but it serve to prove, that the civil power did not set itself against the Christians purely on account of their religion. In another place ‡ he says, that the Christians refused to adorn the doors of their houses with laurel branches on the days of public rejoicing for the victories of the emperors. Now this blameable particularity might not, without some reason, be taken for disaffection to the government.

The first juridical act of severity we find exercised against the Christians, was that of Domitian; but this extended only to banishment, which did not last above a year: for, says the author above quoted, *Facile cæptum repressit restitutis quos ipse relegaverat*. Lactantius, so remarkable for his passionate and pompous stile, acknowledges that from the time of Domitian to that of Decius, the church continued in a peaceable and flourishing condition. This long tranquility, says he §, was interrupted by

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† Chap. 39.

‡ Chap. 35.

§ Chap. 3.

that



that execrable animal Decius, who began to oppress the church : *Post multos annos extitit execrabile animal Decius qui vexaret ecclesiam.*

I shall not here enter into a discussion of the opinion of the learned Mr. Dodwell, concerning the few number of martyrs ; but if the Romans had been such violent persecutors of the Christian religion ; if their senate had condemned so many of its innocent votaries to perish by the most unheard of tortures, plunging them alive in boiling oil, and exposing their wives and daughters naked to the wild beasts in the Circus, how happened it, that they suffered all the first bishops of Rome to live unmolested ? St. Ireneus reckons only one martyr among all these bishops, namely, Telesphorus, who suffered in the year 139 of our vulgar æra ; nor have we any positive proof of this Telesphorus being put to death. Zephyrinus governed the flock at Rome for eighteen years successively, and died peaceably in the year 219. It is true, that in the antient martyrologies, we find almost all the first popes ranked as martyrs ; but the word *martyr* is there taken only in its original and true signification, which is a *witness* and not a *sufferer*.

More-

Moreover we can hardly reconcile this rage of persecution with the liberty granted the Christians, of assembling no less than fifty-six councils in the course of the three first centuries, as is acknowledged by all ecclesiastical writers.

That there were persecutions, is doubtless; but if they had been as violent as represented, it is hardly probable that Tertullian, who wrote with so much energy against the established religion, would have been suffered to die peaceably in his bed. It is certain, that none of the emperors ever read his apology, as an obscure work composed in Africa, can hardly be supposed to have come into the hands of the governors of the world: but then, it might have been shewn to their proconsuls in Africa, and have drawn down their resentment upon the author: nevertheless, we do not find that he suffered martyrdom.

Origen taught the Christian religion publicly in Alexandria, and yet was not put to death for it. And this very Origen himself, who spoke with so much freedom both to the Heathens and the Christians, and who, while he taught Jesus to the one, denied the triple Godhead to the other,

other, expressly acknowledges in his third book against Celsus, " That there were very few  
" who suffered martyrdom, and those at a great  
" distance of time from each other ; notwithstanding, says he, that the christians leave  
" nothing undone to make their religion generally embraced ; running from city to city,  
" and from town to town, to make converts."

It must be confessed, that these continual peregrinations might readily give cause to the priests who were their enemies, to accuse them of a design to raise disturbances ; and yet we find, that these missions were tolerated even among the Egyptians, who have ever been a turbulent, factious, and mean people, and who tore a Roman to death for having killed a cat ; in a word, a nation at all times contemptible, whatever may have been said to the contrary by the admirers of pyramids †.

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† This assertion requires to be proved. It cannot be denied, that from the time that history succeeded to fiction, the Egyptians have constantly appeared a people as dastardly as they were superstitious. Cambyfes made the conquest of their  
country

What person could do more to call down upon him the resentment of both ecclesiastical and

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country in a single battle; Alexander gave them laws without striking a stroke, or without one of their cities daring to wait a siege. The Ptolemies subdued them with as little trouble; nor did Octavius and Augustus Cæsar find more difficulty in bringing them under their obedience. Omar over-run all Egypt in one single campaign; the Mammelukes, who inhabited Colcos, and the regions of Mount Caucasus, became their masters afterwards; and it was these people, and not the Egyptians, who defeated the army of St. Lewis, and took that king prisoner. At length the Mammelukes having, in process of time, become Egyptians, that is to say, effeminate, cowardly, lazy, and dissipated, like the original natives of the climate, they were in three months time brought under the yoke of Selim I. who caused their foldan to be hanged, and made their kingdom a province of the Turkish empire, and such it will remain, till other barbarians may hereafter make themselves masters of it.

Herodotus relates, that in the fabulous ages, a king of Egypt called Sesostris, left his country in  
order



civil power than St. Gregory Taumatargos the disciple of Origen? This same St. Gregory had

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order to go and make the conquest of the world : it is evident, that such a design could only be worthy of a Don Quixote ; and not to mention that the name Sesostris is not Egyptian, we may rank this event like many others of the same date among the romances and fairy tales. Nothing is more common among a conquered people than to tell strange stories of their former grandeur ; just as, in some countries, certain wretched families, in want of the common necessaries of life, pride themselves upon being descended from antient sovereigns. The Egyptian priests told Herodotus, that this king, whom he called Sesostris, went on an expedition to conquer Colchis ; which is much the same as if we were to say, that a king of France set out from Touraine to conquer Norway.

It avails not that these stories are found repeated in a thousand different writers ; it makes them not a whit more probable ; it is much more natural to suppose, that the fierce and athletic inhabitants of mount Caucasus, of Colcos, and the other parts of Scythia, who so often made incursions upon, and

a vision during the night-time, in which an old man appeared to him sent from God, accom-

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ravaged Asia, might have penetrated as far as Egypt; and although the priests of Colcos might afterwards have carried back with them the form of circumcision, yet that is no kind of proof that they were ever conquered by the Egyptians. Diodorus Siculus tells us, that all the kings that were conquered by Sesostris, came every year from their own kingdoms to bring him their respective tributes, when Sesostris made them draw the chariot in which he went in triumph to the temples of his gods. These old womens stories we see every day gravely copied by other writers; it must be confessed, that these kings were very complaisant, to come every year so far to be made hackney horses of.

As to their pyramids, and other monuments of antiquity, they prove nothing but the pride and bad taste of the Egyptian princes, and the wretched slavery of a weak people, who employed their strength, which was their only support, in pleasing the barbarous ostentation of their masters. The policy of these people, even in those times which are so much cried up, appears to have been both

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panied by a woman shining with glory; the first of these was St. John the Evangelist, and

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absurd and tyrannical: they pretended, that the whole universe belonged to their monarchy. It well became such an abject race to set up for conquerors of the world!

The profound learning which we find attributed to the Egyptian priests is also one of the most ridiculous absurdities in antient history, that is to say, in fable. People who pretended that in a revolution of eleven thousand years, the sun had rose twice in the west and set twice in the east in beginning his course anew, were doubtless, curious astronomers. The religion of these priests, who governed the state, was inferior even to that of the most savage people of America: every one knows that crocodiles, monkeys, cats, and onions, were the objects of their adoration; and there is not perhaps in the world so absurd a worship, excepting that of the great Lama.

Their arts were as mean as their religion; there is not one antient Egyptian statue fit to be seen; and whatever they had amongst them of any merit, came from Alexandria in the times of the Pto-

mies

the other the holy virgin. St. John dictated to him a creed, which Gregory afterwards went about to preach. In his way he passed through Neocesarea, where the rain obliged him to stay all night, and he took up his lodgings near a temple famous for its oracles. Here he made several signs of the cross. The high-priest coming the next morning into the temple was surprised to find, that the oracle did not give its answer as usual; upon which he invoked the

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mies and Cæsars, and were the works of Grecian artists: nay, they were even obliged to send to Greece for masters to teach them geometry.

The illustrious Bossuet, in his discourse upon universal history, dedicated to the son of Lewis the Fourteenth, runs wild in his encomiums upon the merits of the Egyptians; this may dazzle the understanding of a young prince, but will never satisfy men of learning. This production is a very fine piece of eloquence; but an historian ought to be more of the philosopher than the orator. The reflections here offered concerning the Egyptians are merely conjectural; for by what other name can we call any thing that is said concerning antiquity?

spirits



spirits of the place, who appearing, told him, that they could no longer inhabit that mansion, as St. Gregory had passed a night there, and had made signs of the cross; upon which the high-priest caused Gregory to be seized, who gave him to understand, that he could drive out or cause to enter the familiar spirits wherever he pleased: if so, said the high-priest, pray send them back here again; then St. Gregory tearing a leaf from a little book he held in his hand, wrote these words upon it, "Gregory to Satan, "I command thee to enter again into this temple;" the paper being laid upon the altar, the dæmons, in obedience to the saint's mandate, gave their oracles that day as usual; after which they remained silent.

This story is related by St. Gregory of Nyssa in his life of St. Gregory Taumaturgos. Certainly the idolatrous priests had great reason to be offended with St. Gregory, and might have delivered him over to the secular power, as one who was their greatest enemy; and yet we do not find that they offered him any hurt.

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The history of St. Cyprian informs us, that he was the first bishop of Carthage who suffered martyrdom; this was Anno Dom. 258. consequently no bishop of Carthage had been put to death on account of religion for a great length of time. The history of this saint does not inform us what charge was brought against him, who were his enemies, or how he incurred the displeasure of the proconsul of Africa. We find St. Cyprian thus writing to Cornelius, bishop of Rome, "There has been a tumult of the people lately at Carthage, in which it was twice proposed to throw me to the lions." It might possibly happen, that the blind resentment of the people of Carthage did at length cause Cyprian to be put to death; for certainly, he was never condemned to suffer for his religion by the emperor Gallus, who lived at so great a distance, and, moreover, permitted Cornelius to exercise his episcopal function under his very eye.

So many and various are the hidden causes, that are frequently blended with the apparent one, in the persecution of an individual, that it is hardly possible for posterity to discover the

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true

true source of the misfortunes that befall even the most considerable personages, much less that of the sufferings of a private person, hardly known to any but those of his own sect.

And here let it be observed, that St. Gregory Taumauturgos, and St. Denis, bishop of Alexandria, who were both cotemporaries with St. Cyprian, neither of them suffered any persecution. How then happened it, that being certainly as well known as the bishop of Carthage, they were suffered to live unmolested, while he was delivered over to punishment? May we not fairly infer, that the one fell a victim to personal and powerful enemies, either in consequence of a malicious accusation, or from reasons of state, which frequently interfere in religious matters, while the other had the good fortune to escape the designs of wicked men?

We cannot with any degree of probability suppose, that the charge of being a Christian was the only cause of St. Ignatius being put to death, under the just and merciful Trajan, since we find that several of his own religion were suffered to accompany and minister comfort to him on his way to Rome †. There had been

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† Tho' we do not presume to doubt the suffering



frequent seditions in Antioch, a city remarkable for the turbulent disposition of its inhabitants ;

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ing of St. Ignatius ; yet, can any man of common understanding, who reads the account of his martyrdom, prevent some doubts from rising in his mind ? The unknown author of this narrative says, that “ Trajan thought his glory would not be “ complete, unless he subjected the God of the “ Christians to his obedience.” What a thought ! Was Trajan that kind of man who would desire to triumph over the Gods ? The emperor is said to have thus accosted Ignatius when he was brought before him, “ Who art thou, unclean spirit ? ” It is very unlikely that an emperor would have discoursed with a prisoner, or have passed sentence upon him himself ; it is not customary for sovereign princes to do so. Trajan might possibly cause Ignatius to be brought before him, but he would not say to him, “ Who art thou ? ” since he knew very well who he was. And as to the term *unclean spirit*, could it possibly have been used by such a man as Trajan ? Is it not evident, that this is an expression used in exorcising, and put by a Christian into the emperor’s mouth ? Good heavens ! what a stile for Trajan.



here Ignatius privately acted as bishop over the Christians : it might happen that some of these dis-

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Can we imagine that Ignatius answered him, that he was called Theophorus, because he carried Jesus in his heart, and that Trajan entered into a long conversation with him concerning Christ ? They make Trajan say at the end of this conference, “ We command that Ignatius, who glories in carrying within him the crucified man, be thrown into prison, loaded with chains, &c.” A sophist, a foe to Christianity, might call Jesus Christ *the crucified man* ; but it is hardly probable, that such a term would have been used in a decree. The punishment of the cross was so common among the Romans, that they could not in their law-stile think of distinguishing by the words crucified man the object of the Christians worship ; nor is it in this manner that the laws or the emperors pronounced sentence.

They afterwards make Ignatius write a long letter to the Christians of Rome ; “ I write to you,” says he, “ though loaded with chains.” Certainly, if he was allowed to write to the Christians of Rome, those Christians were not considered as the objects of persecution ; consequently, Trajan could

turbances being maliciously imputed to the in-

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could have no design to subject their God to his obedience: or, on the other hand, if these Christians were actually liable to persecution, Ignatius was guilty of very great imprudence in regard to them; since this was betraying them to their enemies, and making himself an informer against them.

Surely those who had the compiling of these facts, ought to have had greater regard to probability and the circumstances of the times. The martyrdom of St. Polycarpus also occasions some doubts. It is said that a voice called to him from heaven, saying, "Courage, Polycarpus!" that this voice was distinctly heard by the Christians, but by no other of the attendants: we are told also, that when Polycarpus was tied to the stake, and the fire lighted round him, that the flames parted asunder, and a dove flew out from the midst of them; and that this saint, to whom the fire showed so much respect, exhaled an aromatic odour that perfumed the whole assembly: nevertheless, he, who the fire dare not to approach, could not resist the edge of the sword. Surely we may hope for pardon, if we discover more piety than truth in these relations.

nocent Christians, had occasioned the government to take cognizance of them ; and that the judge might have been mistaken, as it often happens.

St. Simeon, for example, was accused before king Sapor of being a spy to the Romans. The history of his martyrdom tells us, that Sapor proposed to him to worship the sun ; whereas every one knows, that the Persians paid no divine honours to that planet, but only considered it as an emblem of the good principle, the Orasmades, or Sovereign Creator, whom they all adored.

Any one of the least tolerating spirit, cannot help his indignation from rising against those writers, who accused Dioclesian of persecuting the Christians after his accession to the empire. Here we need only refer to Eusebius of Cesarea, whose testimony certainly cannot be rejected. The favourite, the panegyrist of Constantine, and the declared enemy of the emperors his predecessors, is certainly entitled to our credit, when he justifies those very emperors. The following are his own words † :

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† Hist. Ecclesiast. lib. viii.

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“ The emperors had for a long time given  
 “ the Christians great marks of their favour and  
 “ benevolence ; they had intrusted them with  
 “ the care of whole provinces ; many of them  
 “ lived within the imperial palace ; and some  
 “ of the emperors even married Christian  
 “ women : Dioclesian in particular, espoused  
 “ Prisca, whose daughter was wife to Maximia-  
 “ nus Gallerius, &c.”

Let this authentic testimony make us cau-  
 tious how we give too readily into calumny ;  
 and from hence let any impartial person judge,  
 if the persecution raised by Gallerius, after nine-  
 teen years of continual clemency and favour  
 to the Christians, must not have been occasion-  
 ed by some intrigues with which we are at  
 present unacquainted.

From hence also, we may perceive the ab-  
 surdity of that fabulous story of the Theban le-  
 gion, said to have been all massacred for their  
 religion. Can any thing be more ridiculous  
 than to make this legion be brought from Asia  
 by the great St. Barnard ? It is altogether  
 impossible that this legion should have been  
 sent for from Asia to quiet a tumult in Gaul, a  
 year after that tumult was suppressed, and not



less so, that six thousand foot and seven hundred horse-men should have suffered themselves to have been all murdered in a place where two hundred men only might have kept off a whole army. The account of this pretended butchery is introduced with all the marks of imposture: "When the earth groaned under the tyranny of Dioclesian, heaven was peopled with martyrs." Now, this event, such as it is related, is supposed to have happened in 286, the very time in which Dioclesian most favoured the Christians, and that the Roman empire was in a state of the greatest tranquility. But to cut short this matter at once, no such legion as the Theban ever existed: the Romans were both too haughty and too wise to form a corps of those Egyptians, who served only as slaves in Rome, *Verna Canopi*: we may as well suppose them to have had a Jewish legion. We have the names of two and thirty legions that formed the principal military force of the Roman empire: and it is very certain, the Theban legion is not to be found among them. In a word, we may rank this story with the acrostic verses of the Sybils, which are said to have foretold the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ, and with many other like spurious productions, which false zeal has trumped up to impose upon credulity.

CHAP.

## C H A P. X.

Of the DANGER of FALSE LEGENDS and  
PERSECUTION.

**M**ANKIND have been too long imposed upon by falshood : it is therefore time that we should come to the knowledge of the few truths that can be distinguished from amidst the clouds of fiction which cover the Roman History from the times of Tacitus and Suetonius, and with which the annals of the other nations of antiquity have almost always been obscured.

Can any one, for example, believe that the Romans, a grave and modest people, could have condemned Christian virgins, the children of persons of the first quality, to common prostitution ? This is assuredly very inconsistent with the noble austerity of that nation, from whom we receive our laws, and who punished so rigorously the least transgression of chastity in their vestals. These shameful stories may indeed be found in the *Actes sinceres* of Ruinart.

But should we believe those acts before the acts of the Apostles? The *Actes Sinceres* tell us from Bollandus, that there were in the city of Ancira seven Christian virgins, each of them upwards of seventy, whom the governor Theodectes ordered to be deflowered by the young men of the place; but these poor maidens having escaped this disaster (as indeed there was great reason they should), he compelled them to assist stark naked at the mysteries of Diana, at which, by the way, no one ever assisted but in a veil. St. Theodotus, who, though indeed nothing more than an inn-keeper, was not the less pious for that, besought God devoutly that he would be pleased to take away the lives of these holy maidens, lest they should yield to temptation. God heard his prayer. The governor ordered them all to be thrown into a lake with a stone about their neck; immediately after which they appeared to Theodotus, and begged of him, "that he would not suffer their bodies to be devoured by the fishes." These, it seems, were their own words.

Hereupon the inn-keeper faint, and some of his companions, went in the night-time to the side of the lake, which was guarded by a party  
of



of soldiers, a heavenly torch going all the way before, to light them. When they came to the place where the guards were posted, they saw a heavenly horseman armed cap-a-pee, with a lance in his hand, who fell upon the soldiers and dispersed them, while St. Theodotus drew the dead bodies of the virgins out of the water. He was afterwards carried before the governor, who ordered his head to be struck off, without the heavenly horseman interfering to prevent it. However disposed we may be to pay all due reverence to the true martyrs of our holy religion, we must confess it is very hard to believe the story of Bollandus and Ruinart.

Need I add to this the legend of young St. Romanus? Eusebius tells us, that having been condemned to be burnt, he was accordingly thrown into the fire, when some Jews, who were present, made a mock of Jesus Christ, who suffered his followers to be burnt when God had delivered Shadrach, Mefchec, and Abednego out of the fiery furnace. No sooner had the jews uttered this blasphemy, than they beheld St. Romanus walking triumphant and unhurt from forth the flaming pile: this being reported to the emperor, he gave orders for his



being pardoned, telling the judge that he would not have an affair upon his hands with God, (a strange expreffion for Dioclesian!) The judge, however, notwithstanding the emperor's clemency, ordered St. Romanus to have his tongue cut out; and, though he had executioners at hand, commanded the operation to be performed by a furgeon. Young Romanus, who had from his birth laboured under an impediment of fpeech, no fooner loft his tongue than he fpoke diftinctly and with great volubility. Upon this, the furgeon received a fevere reprimand; when, in order to fhew that he had performed his operation, *fecundum artem*, he laid hold of a man who was going by, from whom he cut juft the fame portion of tongue, as he had done from St. Romanus, of which the patient infantly died, for, adds our author very learnedly, “Anatomy teaches us, “that a man cannot live without his tongue.” If Eufebius did really write fuch ftuff, and it has not been added by fome other hand, what degree of credit can we give to his hiftory?

We have the relation of the martyrdom of St. Felicity and her feven children, who are faid  
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to have been condemned to death by the wise and pious Antoninus, but without giving us the author's name; who, most probably, possessed of more zeal than veracity, had a mind to imitate the history of the Maccabees. He begins his relation in the following manner: "St. Felicity was by birth a Roman, and lived in the reign of Antoninus:" it is clear by these words, that the author did not live at the same time with St. Felicity. He says, that they were judged before the pretor in the Campus Martius: whereas the Roman prefect's tribunal was not in the Campus Martius, but in the capitol; for, although the Comitum had been held there formerly, yet at this time it was used only as a place for reviewing the soldiers, for chariot-races, and for military games: this alone is sufficient to detect the fiction.

The author adds furthermore, that after sentence was passed, the emperor committed the care of seeing it executed to different judges; a circumstance which is entirely repugnant to the usual forms in those times, and in every other.

We also read of St. Hypolitus, who is said to have been drawn in pieces by horses, as was  
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Hypolitus the son of Theseus. But a punishment of this kind was not known among the ancient Romans; and this fabulous story took its rise wholly from the similitude of names.

And here we may make one observation, that in the multitude of martyrologies, composed wholly by the Christians themselves, we almost always read of a great number of them coming of their own accord into the prison of their condemned brother, following him to execution, saving the blood as it flows from him, doing the sepulchral rites to his dead body, and performing miracles with his relics. Now, if the persecution was levelled only at the religion, would not the authors of it have destroyed those who thus openly declared themselves Christians, administered comfort and assistance to their brethren under sentence, and were, moreover, charged with working enchantments with their inanimate remains? would they not have treated them as we have treated several different sects of protestants, whom we have butchered and burnt by hundreds, without distinction of age or sex? Is there amongst all the authenticated accounts of the antient persecutions a single instance like that of St. Bartholomew, and the massacre in Ireland? Is there



there one that comes near to the annual festival, which is still celebrated at Toulouse, and which for its cruelty, deserves to be for ever abolished, where a whole city goes in procession to return thanks to God, and felicitate each other, for having, two hundred years ago, massacred upwards of four thousand of their fellow subjects?

With horror I say it, but it is an undoubted truth, that we, who call ourselves Christians, have been persecutors, executioners, and assassins! And of whom? Of our own brethren: it is we who have razed an hundred towns to their foundations with the crucifix or bible in our hands, and who have continually persevered in shedding torrents of blood, and lighting the fires of persecution, from the reign of Constantine to the time of the religious horrors of the canibals who inhabited the Cevennes; horrors which, praised be God, no longer exist.

Indeed we still see at times some miserable wretches of the more distant provinces sent to the gallows on account of religion: since the year 1745, eight persons have been hanged of those called predicants or ministers of the gospel, whose only crime was that of having prayed.

prayed to God for their king in bad French; and giving a drop of wine, and a morsel of leavened bread, to a few ignorant peasants. Nothing of all this is known at Paris, where pleasure engrosses the whole attention, and where they are ignorant of every thing that passes, not only in foreign kingdoms, but even in the more distant parts of their own. The trials in these cases frequently take up less time than is used to condemn a deserter. The king wants only to be informed of this, and he would certainly extend his mercy on such occasions.

We do not find that the Roman Catholic priests are treated in this manner in any protestant country: there are above a hundred of them, both in England and Ireland, publicly known to be such, and who have yet been suffered to live peaceable and unmolested, even during the last war.

Shall we then always be the last to adopt the wholesome sentiments of other nations? They have corrected their errors, when shall we correct ours? It has required sixty years to make us receive the demonstrations of the great Newton: we have but just begun to dare to save the  
lives

lives of our children by inoculation, and it is but of a very late date that we have put in practice the true principles of Agriculture: when shall we begin to put in practice the true principles of humanity, or with what face can we reproach the heathens with having made so many martyrs, when we ourselves are guilty of the same cruelties in the like circumstances?

Let it be allowed, that the Romans put to death a number of Christians on account of their religion only: if so, the Romans were highly blameable; but shall we commit the same injustice, and while we reproach them for their persecutions, be persecutors ourselves?

If there should be any one so destitute of honesty, or so blinded with enthusiasm, as to ask me here, Why I thus undertake to lay open our errors and faults, and to destroy the credit of all our false miracles and fictitious legends, which serve to keep alive the zeal and piety of many persons? should such a person tell me, that some errors are absolutely necessary, that, like ulcers, they give a vent to the humours of the body, and by being taken away would endanger its destruction, thus would I answer him:

All



All those false miracles by which you shake the credit due to real ones, the numberless absurd legends with which you clog the truths of the gospel, serve only to extinguish the pure flame of religion in our hearts. There are too many persons, who desirous of being instructed, but who have not the time for acquiring instruction, say, the teachers of my religion have deceived me, therefore there is no religion : it is better to throw myself into the arms of nature than those of error ; and I had rather place my dependance on her law than in the inventions of men. Others again unhappily go still greater lengths : they perceive that imposture hath put a bridle in their mouths, and therefore will not submit even to the necessary curb of truth : they incline towards atheism, and run into depravity, because others have been impostors and persecutors.

Such are undeniably the consequences of pious frauds and superstitious fopperies. Mankind in general reason but by halves : it is certainly a very vicious way of arguing, to say, that because the golden legend of Voraginus, and the Flower of Saints of the jesuit Ribadneira, abound in nothing but absurdities, therefore there is no God : that the Catholics have  
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massacred a great number of Hugonots, and the Hugonots in their turn have murdered a great number of Catholics, thererore there is no God: that certain bad men have made use of confession, the holy communion, and all the other sacraments, as a means for perpetrating the most atrocious crimes, and therefore there is no God. For my part, I, on the contrary, should conclude from hence, that there is a God, who after this transitory life, in which we have wandered so far from the true knowledge of him, and have seen so many crimes committed under the sanction of his holy name, will at length deign to comfort us for the many dreadful calamities we have suffered in this life: for if we consider the many religious wars, and the forty papal schisms, which have almost all of them been bloody; if we reflect upon the multitude of impostures, which have almost all proved fatal; the irreconcilable animosities excited by differences in opinions, and the numberless evils occasioned by false zeal; I cannot but believe that men have for a long time had their hell in this world.

## C H A P. XL.

## The ill Consequences of NON-TOLERATION.

**W**HAT then, it may be demanded, shall every one be allowed to believe only his own reason, and to think that that reason, whether true or false, should be the guide of his actions? Yes, certainly, provided he does not disturb the peace of community; for man has it not in his power to believe or disbelieve\*; but he has it in his power to pay a proper respect to the established customs of his country; and if we say that it is a crime not to believe in the established religion, we ourselves condemn the primitive Christians our forefathers, and justify those whom we accuse of having put them to death.

It may be replied, that the difference here is very great, because all other religions are of men, whereas the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman church is of God alone. But let me seriously ask, Whether the divine origin of our

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\* See Mr. Locke's excellent letter upon toleration.  
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religion is a reason for establishing it by hatred, rage, banishment, confiscation of goods, imprisonment, tortures, and murder, and by solemn acts of thanksgiving to the Deity for such outrages? The more assured we are of the divine authority of the Christian religion, the less does it become weak man to enforce the observance of it : if it is truly of God, God will support it without his assistance. Persecution never makes any but hypocrites or rebels ; a shocking alternative ! Besides, ought we to endeavour to establish, by the bloody hand of the executioner, the religion of that God who fell by such hands, and who, while on earth, taught only mercy and forbearance ?

And here let us consider a while the dreadful consequences of the right of non-toleration ; if it was permitted us to strip of his possessions, to throw into prison, or to take away the life of a fellow-creature, who, born under a certain degree of latitude, did not profess the generally received religion of that latitude, what is there would exempt the principal persons of the state from falling under the like punishments ? Religion equally binds the monarch and the beggar. Accordingly, we know that upwards of fifty doctors or monks have maintained this execrable

ecrable doctrine, That it was lawful to depose, or even to kill, such princes who did not agree with the established church; and we also know, that the several parliaments of the kingdom have on every occasion condemned these abominable decisions of still more abominable divines †.

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† The jesuit Bussembaum, and his commentator the Jesuit La Croix, tells us, that it "is lawful to kill any prince excommunicated by the pope, of whatsoever country, because the whole world belongs to the pope; and that whoever accepts of, or executes such commission does a meritorious and charitable act." It is this maxim which seems to have been invented in the mad-houses of hell, that has almost stirred up all France against the Jesuits, who are now more than ever reproached for this doctrine, which they have so often preached up, and as often disavowed. They have endeavoured to justify themselves by producing nearly the same maxims in the writing of St. Thomas D'Acquinas and several Dominicans †. It is true indeed, that this St. Thomas, the angelic Doctor and Interpreter of the Divine Will, advan-

† Peruse, if you can get it, the letter of a layman to a divine on the subject of St. Thomas, a jesuitical pamphlet published in 1762.

The blood of Henry the Great was still reeking on the sword of his murderer, when the

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ces, that an apostate prince loses his right to the crown, and forfeits the obedience due to him from his subjects†: that the church may condemn him to death: that the emperor Julian was permitted to reign only, because he was too powerful to be resisted: that we ought to kill every heretick‡: that those who deliver a people from the government of a tyrannical prince, &c. &c. We have, doubtless, a great respect for the angel of the schools; but if he had preached up such maxims in France at the time of his brother James Clement, and the mendicant Ravailac, his angelical doctorship would have met with but a scurvy reception.

It must be confessed, that John Gerson, chancellor of the university, carried the matter yet farther than St. Thomas; and John Pettit, the Franciscan, still farther than Gerson. Several of the order openly maintained the detestable maxims of their brother Pettit. It must be acknowledged, that this hellish doctrine of king-killing proceeds wholly from the ridiculous notion which has so long

† Lib. ii. part ii. question 12.

‡ Ibid. Quest. 11. and 12.



parliament of Paris, issued an arret to establish the independance of the crown as a fundamental law : whilst cardinal du Perron, who owed his elevation to that prince, opposed this decree in an assembly of the states, and got it suppressed. The following expression, made use of on this occasion by Du Perron, is to be found in all the historical tracts of those times : “ Should a prince, says he, turn Arian, it “ would be necessary to depose him.”

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prevailed amongst all orders of monks, that the pope is a God upon earth, and can dispose of the crowns and lives of sovereigns at his pleasure. In this respect, we are inferior even to those Tartarian idolaters, who hold the grand Lama to be immortal ; greedily gather the contents of his close-stool, dry these precious relics with great care, inclose them in rich cases, and kiss them with the warmest devotion. For my part, I confess, that I had rather, for the good of my country, and the sake of public tranquillity, carry those relics constantly about my neck, than to give my assent to the pope's having in any case whatsoever, an authority over the temporals of kings, or even those of a private person.

But

But here I must beg the cardinal's pardon; for let us for a while adopt his chimerical supposition, and say, that one of our kings having read the History of the Councils and of the Fathers, and being struck with these words, "My Father is greater than me," and taking them in too literal a sense, should be divided between the council of Nice and that of Constantinople, and adopt the opinion of Eusebius of Nicomedia: yet I should not be the less obliged to obey my king, nor think the oath of allegiance I had taken to him less binding; and if you, Mr. Cardinal, should dare to oppose him, and I was one of your judges, I should, without scruple, declare you guilty of high treason.

Du Perron carried this dispute much farther; but I shall cut it very short, by saying with every good citizen, that I should not look upon myself bound to obey Henry IV. because he was king; but because he held the crown by the incontestible right of birth, and as the just reward of his virtue and magnanimity.

Permit me then to say, that every individual is entitled by the same right to enjoy the inheritance of his father, and that he in no wise deserves

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to be deprived of it, or to be sent to the gallows, because he may perhaps be of the opinion of Ratram against Paschasius Ratberg, or of Baren-garius against Scotus.

We are very sensible that there are many of our tenets which have not been always clearly explained: Jesus Christ not having expressly told us in what manner the Holy Ghost really proceeds, both the Latin church and the Greek believed, that it proceeded only from the father; but afterwards an article was added to the creed, in which it is said to proceed from the son also. Now, I desire to know, whether the day after this new article was added, a person who might abide by the old creed, would have been deserving of death? And is there less cruelty or injustice, in punishing at this day, a person who may possibly think as they did two or three centuries ago? Or was there any crime in believing in the time of Honorius I. that Christ had not two wills?

It is but very lately, that the belief of the immaculate conception has been established: the Dominicans have not received it as yet. Now will any one tell me the precise point of time, when the Dominicans will begin to deserve  
punish-



punishment in this world, and in that which is to come.

If any one can set us an example for our conduct, it is certainly the Apostles and the Evangelists. There was sufficient matter to excite a violent schism between St. Peter and St. Paul. The latter in his Epistles to the Galatians †, says, “That he withstood Peter to the face, “because he was to be blamed; for before that “certain men came from James, he did eat “with the Gentiles: but when they were “come, he withdrew and separated himself, “fearing them which were of the circumcision, “inasmuch, that Barnabas also was carried away “with his dissimulation.” “But,” adds he, “When I saw that they walked not uprightly, “according to the truth of the Gospel, I said “unto Peter before them all, if thou, being a “Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and “not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the “Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”

Here now was a subject for a violent dispute. The question was, whether the new Christians

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† Chap. ii. v. 11—14.

followed the manner of the Jews or not. St. Paul at that very time sacrificed in the temple of Jerusalem; and we know that the fifteen first bishops of Jerusalem were circumcised Jews; and that they observed the Sabbath, and abstained from the meats forbidden by the Jewish law. Should a bishop of Spain or Portugal at this time be circumcised, or observe the Sabbath, he would infallibly burn at an *auto-da-fé*: and yet this fundamental point did not occasion the least animosity between the Apostles, or between the primitive Christians.

If the Evangelists had resembled our modern writers, what an immense field was there for disputation between them. St. Matthew reckons only eight and twenty generations from David to Jesus. St. Luke reckons forty-one; and these generations are absolutely different. Yet no dissention appears to have arisen between the disciples on account of these apparent contradictions, which have been so admirably well reconciled by the fathers of the church: but they still continued in brotherly love, peace, and charity with each other. What more noble lesson can we have of indulgence in our disputes, and of humility in regard to those things which we do not understand?

St.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to certain Jews of Rome who had been converted to Christianity, employs all the latter part of his third chapter, in telling them, that by faith alone they will be glorified, and that no man is justified by good works only. St. James, on the contrary, in the second chapter of his Epistle to the twelve tribes dispersed over the earth, is continually preaching up to them, that without good works no man can be saved. This has occasioned the separation of two great communions among us; but it caused no division among the Apostles.

If the persecuting of those who differ from us in opinion, is an holy action, it must be confessed, that he who had murdered the greatest number of hereticks would be the most glorious saint in heaven. If so, what a pitiful figure would a man who had only stripped his brethren of all they had, and thrown them to rot in a dungeon, make, in comparison of the zealot who had butchered his hundreds on the famous day of St. Bartholomew? This may be proved as follows:

The successor of St. Peter and his consistory cannot err; they approved, they celebrated, they consecrated the action of St. Bartholomew;



consequently that action was holy and meritorious; and, by a like deduction, he who of two murderers, equal in piety, had ripped up the bellies of eighty Hugonot women big with child, would be entitled to double the portion of glory of another who had butchered but twelve: in this manner, by the same argument also, the enthusiasts of the Cevennes have reason to believe that they will be exalted in glory, in proportion to the number of catholic women, priests and monks, whom they may have knocked on the head: but surely these are strange claims to eternal happiness.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XII.

If NON-TOLERATION was part of the divine Law among the JEWS, and whether it was always put in practice.

BY the divine law, I take to be understood those rules and precepts which have been given to us by God himself. For example, he ordained, that the Jews should eat a lamb dressed with bitter herbs, and standing with a staff in their hand, in remembrance of the passover; that the consecration of the high-priest should be performed by touching the tip of his right ear, his right hand, and his right foot with blood; that the scape-goat should be charged with the sins of the people; he also forbid the eating of all shell-fish, swine, hares, hedge-hogs, owls, the heron, and the lap-wing†.

He also instituted their several feasts and ceremonies; and all those things which appeared

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† Deut. chap. xiv.

arbitrary to other nations, and subjected to positive law and custom, when commanded by God himself, became a divine law to the Jews, in like manner, as whatever Jesus Christ the son of Mary and the son of God has commanded us, is to us a divine law.

But here let us not presume to enquire wherefore it hath pleased God to substitute a new law in the room of that he had given to Moses, and wherefore he commanded Moses more things than he did the patriarch Abraham, and Abraham more than Noah †. In this he appears

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† Agreeable to my intention of making some useful notes upon this treatise, I shall here observe, that although God is said to have made a covenant with Noah, and with all the beasts of the field; yet he permits him to eat of every thing that hath the breath of life, excepting only the eating of blood, which he positively prohibits; and moreover adds, that “the Lord will take vengeance of every beast by whom man’s blood shall be shed.”

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From these passages and several others of the like tenor, we may infer, with all the sagés of antient and



with infinite condescension, to have accommodated himself to times and the state of popula-

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and present times, and with every person of enlightened conceptions, that beasts are endowed with some knowledge. We do not find God making a covenant with trees or with stones that have no sense; but he does with the beasts, whom it has pleased him to endow with senses, frequently more exquisite than our own, and consequently with those ideas that are necessarily connected with sense. It is for this reason, that he prohibits the barbarous custom of feeding upon their blood, the blood being the source of life, and consequently of sense. Take away all the blood from an animal, and all his organs will immediately cease from action. It is therefore with the greatest justice that we find it said in so many different parts of the Holy Scripture, that the soul, that is to say, what was called the sensitive soul, is in the blood; an opinion perfectly agreeable to nature, and as such received by all nations.

It is upon this opinion that we found that pity which we ought to show to all animals. It is one of the seven precepts of the Noachides that were adopted by the Jews, That no one shall eat the limb of a living animal. This precept is a proof

tion amongst the inhabitants of the earth ; and in this gradation, to have shewn his paternal

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that mankind had formerly the cruelty to mutilate animals, in order to feast upon the limbs so cut off, and to leave the creatures living, in order to feed successively upon the other parts of their bodies ; a custom which we find to have actually subsisted among some barbarous nations, witness the sacrifices offered in the island of Chios to *Bacchus Omados*, or the eater of raw flesh. God, by permitting the flesh of animals to serve us for food, seems to recommend them to our humanity. It must be confessed, that there is great cruelty in putting them to torture, and that nothing but custom could have lessened in us the natural abhorrence of slaughtering an animal whom we have fed with our own hands. There have in all times been sects who have made a religious scruple of such practices, as do to this day all the inhabitants of the peninsula of the Ganges. The whole sect of Pythagoreans, both in Greece and Italy, constantly abstained from the eating of flesh. And Porphyry, in his book upon Abstinence, reproaches his disciples with having quitted their sect only for the sake of indulging an inhuman appetite.

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love: but these are depths too profound for our weak faculties to measure; I shall therefore con-

It is in my opinion giving up the light of reason, to pretend to assert, that beasts are no more than mere machines: for, is it not a manifest contradiction, to acknowledge that God has given them the organs of sense, and then to affirm that they have no sense?

Besides, I think one must never have made any observation upon animals, not to distinguish in them the different cries of want, suffering, joy, fear, love, anger, and indeed all other affections of the mind or body; surely, it would be very strange, that they should so well express what they have no sense of!

This remark may furnish abundant matter of reflection to inquisitive minds, in relation to the power and goodness of the Creator, who has been pleased to bestow life, sense, ideas, and memory, on those beings, whose organs he has formed with his own all-powerful hand. As to us, we neither know how these organs are formed, how they are unfolded, in what manner we receive life, nor by what laws, sense, ideas, memory, and will, are annexed to that life; and yet, in this dark and eter-



fine myself to my subject, and proceed to examine the state of non-toleration among the Jews.

It is certain, that in Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, we find several very rigorous laws and severe punishments in relation to religious worship. Several able commentators have been greatly puzzled to reconcile these books of Moses, with several passages in the prophets Jeremiah and Amos, and with the famous discourse of St. Stephen, as related in the Acts of the Apostles. Amos says, that the Jews constantly worshipped in the wilderness, Moloc and Chiun, gods whom they had made to themselves †. And Jeremiah expressly says, that God commanded not their fathers concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices in the day that he brought them out of the land of Egypt ‡. And St. Stephen in his discourse

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nal state of ignorance inherent to our natures, we are perpetually disputing with, and persecuting each other, like the bulls of the field, who fight with their horns, without knowing for what use, or in what manner those horns were given them.

† Amos, ch. v. v. 26. ‡ Jerem. ch. vii. v. 22.

to the Jews abovementioned, says, " They  
 " worshipped the host of heaven, and that they  
 " neither offered sacrifices nor slew beasts, for  
 " the space of forty years in the wilderness,  
 " but took up the tabernacle of Moloc and the  
 " star of their god Remphan \*."

Other criticks again infer from the worship  
 of so many strange gods here mentioned, that  
 the Israelites were indulged with having these  
 gods by Moses; and, in support of their opinion  
 they quote the following words in Deu-  
 teronomy, " When ye shall enter into the land  
 " of Canaan, ye shall not do after all the  
 " things that we do here this day, every man  
 " whatsoever is right in his own eyes ††."

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\* Acts, ch. vii. v. 42.      † Deut. ch. xii. v. 8.

† Several writers have too rashly concluded from  
 this passage, that the chapter concerning the golden  
 calf (which is no other than the Egyptian god  
 Apis) has, as well as many other chapters, been  
 added to the books of Moses.

Eben-Ezra was the first who undertook to prove,  
 that the Pentateuch (or the five books of Moses)  
 was

And as a farther proof, they say that there is no mention made of any religious act of the

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was written in the times of the Kings. Wollaston, Collins, Tindal, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and many others, have asserted, that in those ages, men had no other way of committing their thoughts to writing, but by engraving them upon polished stone, brick, lead, or wood; and tell us that in the time of Moses the Chaldeans and Egyptians had no other way of writing, and that then they could engrave but in a very abridged manner, and by hieroglyphicks, the substance only of such things as they thought worthy of being transmitted to posterity, and could never form any regular histories: then it was next to an impossibility to engrave books of any considerable bulk in the wilderness, where they were continually changing of their habitation; where they had no person to furnish them with cloathing, to make that cloathing for them, or even to mend their sandals, and where God was obliged to perform a miracle to preserve the garments of his people entire. They say, that it is hardly probable, that there should have been so many engravers among them, at the time that they were so deficient in the more necessary arts of life, and did not know even how to make bread: and if we answer to this, that the pillars of the tabernacle



people of Israel while in the wilderness; neither the celebration of the passover, nor of the feast

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nacle were of brass, and their chapters of massy silver, they reply, that though the order for this might have been given in the wilderness, it was not executed till after they were settled in perfect tranquility.

They cannot conceive, they say, how the Israelites, who were a poor and vagabond people, could have asked for a calf of massy gold to be erected for the object of their adoration, at the foot of the very mountain where God was then talking with Moses, and in the very midst of the thunder and lightning, and the sound of the heavenly trumpet, which were heard and seen by all present. They profess their astonishment, that it should have been only the day before Moses descended from the mountain, that all the people should have addressed themselves to his brother Aaron, to raise this golden calf? or how it was possible for Aaron to have cast such an image in one single day; and still more, how Moses could have reduced it into an impalpable powder? They say, that it is impossible for any artist to make a statue of gold in less than three months, and that not all the  
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of the tabernacles, nor of any public form of worship being established, nor even the prac-

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possible efforts of the chymical art, are sufficient to reduce such a mass into a powder that may be swallowed, and consequently, that the prevarication of Aaron and this operation of Moses must have been two miracles.

Deceived by the humanity and goodness of their hearts, they cannot believe that Moses slaughtered three and twenty thousand souls to expiate this crime; nor, that so many men would have tamely suffered themselves to be murdered without a third miracle. Lastly, they think it very extraordinary, that Aaron, who was the most guilty of all, should have been rewarded for that very crime for which the rest underwent so dreadful a punishment, by being created high-priest, and go to offer sacrifice at the high altar, while the bodies of three and twenty thousand of his slaughtered brethren lay bleeding round him.

They start the same difficulties concerning the eighty thousand Israelites who were slain by order of Moses, to atone for the crime of a single one of them, for being surprized with a Moabite woman; and

tice of circumcision, the seal of the covenant made by God with Abraham.

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and seeing that Solomon, and so many other of the Jewish kings, did, without being punished for it, take to themselves strange wives, they cannot conceive what great crime there could be, in an individual making an alliance with one Moabite woman.

Ruth was a Moabite, though her family was originally of Bethlehem: the scripture always distinguishes her by the name of Ruth the Moabite; and yet, she went and laid herself by the side of Boaz, received six measures of barley from him, was afterwards married to him, and was the grandmother of David. Rahab was not only a stranger, but also a common prostitute or a harlot, as she is called in Scripture; yet she was taken to wife by Solomon, a prince of Juda; from whom also David was descended. This Rahab is taken to be a type of the Christian church by several of the ancient fathers; and especially by Origen, in his seventh homily upon Joshua.

Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, by whom David begat Solomon, was an Hittite. And if we go farther



They likewise refer to the history of Joshua, where this great conqueror thus addresses the

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ther back, we shall find that the patriarch Judah married a Canaanitess; and his sons lay with Thamar who was of the race of Aaron: and the woman with whom Judah, without knowing it, committed incest, was not of the Israelitish race.

Thus then was our Lord Jesus Christ pleased to take upon him flesh in a family descended from five aliens, to shew, that all nations should partake of his inheritance. The rabbin Aben-Ezra was, as we have already observed, the first who undertook to prove that the Pentateuch was compiled long after the time of Moses; and for his authority quotes several passages in those books; and amongst others the following: "The Canaanite then dwelt in that land. The mountain of Moria, called the mountain of God. The bed of Og, king of Bashan, is still to be seen in Rahab. And the country of Bashan is called the villages of Jajar unto this day. Never was there a prophet seen in Israel like unto Moses. These are the kings who reigned in Edom, before any king reigned over Israel." He pretends, that these passages, in which mention is made of events that hap-

Jews : “ If it seem evil unto you to serve the  
 “ Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve ;

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happened long after the time of Moses, could never have been written by Moses himself. To this it is answered, that these passages were added long after by way of notes by the transcribers.

Newton, whose name ought on every other occasion to be mentioned with respect, but who, as a man, may have been liable to error, in the introduction to his commentaries upon Daniel and St. John, ascribes the five books of Moses, Joshua, and Judges, to holy writers of much later date ; and founds his opinion on the thirty-sixth chapter of Genesis, the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twenty-first chapters of Judges, the eighth chapter of Samuel, the second chapter of Chronicles, and the fourth chapter of the book of Ruth : and indeed, considering that in the thirty-sixth chapter of Genesis, we find mention made of Kings, and that David is spoken of in the books of Judges, and that of Ruth, it should seem that those books were compiled in the times of the Kings. This is also the opinion of several divines, at the head of whom is the famous Le Clerc. But there are very few of those who are followers of this opinion, that have

“ whether the gods which your fathers served  
 “ in Mesopotamia or the gods of the Am-

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have had the curiosity to fathom these mysteries ; a curiosity, which certainly makes no part of the duty of man. For when the learned and the ignorant, the prince and the peasant, shall, after this short life, appear together before the throne of eternal majesty, every one of us then, will wish to have been just and humane, generous and compassionate ; and no one will pride himself in having known exactly the year in which the Pentateuch was written, or in having been able to distinguish the true text from the additional notes in use among the Scribes. God will not ask us whether we were of the opinion of the Masorites against the Talmud, or whether we may not have mistaken, a *Caph* for a *Beth*, a *Yod* for a *Vau*, or a *Daleth* for a *Resh*. No, certainly ; but he will judge us according to our deeds, and not according to our knowledge in the Hebrew language. Let us therefore abide firmly by the decision of the church, so far as is agreeable to the reasonable duty of a believer.

We will conclude this note with an important passage from Leviticus, a book composed after the time



“morites, in whose land yedwell:” and the people answered and said, “Nay, but we will serve

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time of the golden calf. The Jews are there commanded no more to offer their sacrifices to goats with whom they have gone a-whoring †. We cannot say whether this strange worship came from Egypt, the country of sorcery and superstition; but there is reason to believe, that the custom of our pretended magicians of keeping a Sabbath apart, for adoring a goat, and committing such detestable uncleanness with it, as is shocking to conception, came from the antient Jews, as it is certain, that they first taught a part of Europe the practice of magic. What a detestable people! Surely such infamous and unnatural practices deserve the punishment, at least equal to that which befel them for worshipping the golden calf; and yet, we find the law-giver contents himself with simply prohibiting those practices. We have quoted this subject, only to shew what the Jewish nation was: the sin of bestiality must certainly have been very common amongst them, since they are the only people we know among whom there was a necessity for any law to prohibit that crime, the commission

† Leviticus, chap. vii. and chap. xviii. v. 22.

“ the LORD our GOD (*Adonai*).” And Joshua said unto the people, “ Ye have chosen, now

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of which was not even suspected by any other legislators.

There is reason to believe, that on account of the fatigues and distresses which the Jews suffered in the deserts of Paran, Horeb, and Kadash-Barnee, the female species, which is always the weakest, might have failed amongst them; and it is certain, that the Jews were greatly in want of women, since we find them almost always commanded, when they conquered any town or village, to the right or left of the lake Asphaltes, to put all the inhabitants to the sword, excepting only the young women, who were of an age to know man.

The Arabs, who still inhabit a part of these deserts, stipulate to this day in the treaties which they make with the caravans, that they shall furnish them with marriageable women; so that it is not improbable, but that the young men of those barren countries, might have carried the depravation of human nature so far, as to have had carnal commerce with goats, as is related of the shepherds of Calabria.

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“therefore put away the strange gods which are among you.” Hence, say they, it is evident, that the Israelites had other gods beside the LORD, (*Adonai*) under Moses.

It is altogether needless to take up the reader's time with an attempt to refute the opinions of those critics who think that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses. This subject has been sufficiently discussed long ago; and, even admitting that some few parts of it were written in the times of the Judges, the Kings, or the Prophets, it would not make the whole less inspired or divine. It is sufficient, in my opinion, if the Holy Scripture proves to us, that, notwithstanding the extraordinary punishments which the Jews called down upon themselves by

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It is still however uncertain, whether any monsters were produced by this unnatural copulation, and whether there is any foundation for the antient stories of satyrs, fauns, centaurs, and minotaur: history says there is; but natural philosophy has not yet cleared up to us this monstrous circumstance.

† Joshua, chap. xxiv. § xv. & seq.

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their idolatrous worship of the golden calf; they continued for a long time to enjoy perfect liberty of conscience; and it is even probable, that Moses, after having massacred the twenty three thousand, in the first transports of his rage against his brother and them for having erected this idol, finding that nothing was to be gained by such severity in matters of religion, was glad to wink at the fondness which the people expressed for strange gods.

And indeed he himself appears soon after to have transgressed the very law which he had given ||: for, notwithstanding his having forbidden all molten or graven images, we find him erecting the brazen serpent. And this law was again dispensed with by Solomon in the building of his temple; where that prince caused twelve brazen bulls to be placed as supporters to the great Laver, as also cherubims in the ark, which had two heads, one of an eagle and the other of a calf; and it was probable from this latter head, badly made, and found in the temple by the Roman soldiers at the time of their plundering of it, that the Jews were so

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|| Numbers, chap. xxi. v. 9.

long reported to have worshipped an ass. Moreover, notwithstanding the repeated prohibitions against the worship of false gods, Solomon, tho' giving way to the grossest idolatry, lived and died in peace. Jeroboam, to whom God himself gave ten parts out of twelve of the kingdom, set up two golden calves, and yet reigned two and twenty years, having united in his person the two-fold dignity of monarch and of high-priest. The petty people of Juda erected altars and images to strange gods under Rehoboam. Pious king Aza suffered the high places to remain undemolished. And lastly, Uriah the high-priest erected a brazen altar, which had been sent to him by the king of Syria, in the temple, in the place of the altar of burnt-offerings §. In a word, we do not any where find the least constraint in point of religion among the Jews; it is true, indeed, that they frequently destroyed and murdered one another; but that was from motives of political concern, and not about the modes of belief. It is true, that among the prophets we find some making heaven a party in their revenge.

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§ Kings, b. iv. ch. xvi.

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Elias,

Elias, for instance, calls down fire from heaven to consume the priests of Baal †. And Elijah sent bears to devour two and forty little children, for calling him bald head ‡. But these miracles are very rare in their kind, and it would moreover be somewhat inhuman to desire to imitate them. We are also told that the Jews were a most ignorant and cruel people; and that in their war with the Midianites § they were commanded by Moses to kill all the male children and all the child-bearing women, and to divide the spoil †. They found in the enemy's camp 675,000 sheep, 72,000 oxen,

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† Kings, b. iii. ch. xviii. ver. 38 and 40.

‡ Kings, b. iv. ch. ii. ver. 20.

§ Midian was not included in the Land of Promise: it is a little canton of Idumea, in Arabia Petræa, beginning to the northward of the torrent of Arron, and ending at the torrent of Zared, in the midst of rocks on the eastern border of the lake Asphaltés. This country is inhabited by a small Arabian herd or tribe, and may be about eight leagues long, and about seven in breadth.

† Numb. chap. xxxi.

61,000



61,000 asses, and 32,000 young maidens, and they took all the spoil and slew the captives. Several commentators will have it, that thirty-two of the young women were sacrificed to the Lord; "The Lord's tribute was thirty and "two persons ||."

It is evident that the Jews offered human sacrifices to God; witness that of Jephtha's daughter ‡, and of king Agag hewed in pieces by the

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|| Numb. ch. xxxi. ver. 40.

‡ It is plain by the text, that Jephtha did actually sacrifice his daughter. Doctor Calmet, in his dissertation upon Jephtha's vow, says, that "God "did not approve these vows; but when once "any one had made them, he insisted upon their "being fulfilled, was it only to punish those who "made them, and to put a check upon them in the "doing it, by the fear of being obliged to perform "them." This action of Jephtha is condemned by St. Augustine and almost all the fathers, although the Scripture says, that he was filled with the spirit of God; and St. Paul, in his eleventh chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, greatly praises Jephtha, exalting him even above Samuel and David.

prophet Samuel †. And we find the prophet Ezekiel promising them, by way of encourage-

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St. Jerom, in his Epistle to Julian, expresses himself thus: "Jephtha sacrificed his daughter to the Lord, and therefore the Apostle has placed him among the saints." Here now is a diversity in opinions, concerning which it is not permitted to pronounce a decision; nay, it is even dangerous to have any opinion of our own.

† The death of Agag, king of the Amalekites, may be looked upon as a real sacrifice. Saul had made this prince a prisoner of war, and had admitted him to a capitulation notwithstanding that the priest and the prophet Samuel had charged him to spare no one; saying to him expressly, "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."—"And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord at Gilgal."

"The zeal with which this prophet was animated," saith Calmet, "put a sword into his hand on this occasion, to revenge the honour of God, and to confound Saul."

\* First of Samuel, chap. xv. ver. 6th and 23d.

ment, that they should feast upon human flesh :  
 “ Ye shall eat of the flesh of the horse, and of his

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In this melancholy adventure, we have a vow, a priest, and a victim ; consequently, it is a real sacrifice. We find from history, that most nations, the Chinese excepted, were wont to sacrifice human victims to the Deity : Plutarch says, that this custom prevailed even among the Romans at some certain times. Cæsar, in his Commentaries tells us, that the Germans were going to sacrifice two of his officers, whom he had sent to confer with their king Ariovistus, had not Cæsar delivered them by beating the German army. I have in another place observed †, that this violation of the laws of nations, and the offering of human victims, which was rendered more horrible by its being done by the hands of their women, seems a little to contradict Tacitus's panegyric on them in his treatise *De Moribus Germanorum* ; which seems rather to have been designed as a satire upon the Roman people, than to praise the Germans, to whom he was an utter stranger. And here we may observe by the way, that Tacitus was sonder of satire than of truth : he labours to throw every thing, even the most indifferent actions, into an

† Additions to General History, part i. of Voltaire.



“ rider, and ye shall drink the blood of the princes  
 “ of the earth §.” But although the history of

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odious point of light; and his malice pleases us as much as his stile, because we are naturally fond of wit and slander.

But to return to the subject of human sacrifices. This custom prevailed as much amongst our forefathers as with the Germans; it is the lowest degree of debasement to which human nature can fall when left to herself, and is one of the effects of the weakness of mortal understanding, which reasons thus: We ought to offer to God whatever we have of most pleasing or valuable; there is nothing more valuable than our children; therefore we ought to select the youngest and most beautiful, to sacrifice them to the Deity.

Philo says, that the Canaanites used to offer their children in sacrifice, before God had commanded Abraham, as a trial of his faith, to offer up his only son Isaac.

Sanchoniathon, as quoted by Eusebius, says, that the Phœnicians, when threatened with any

§ Ezek. chap. xxxix. ver. 49.

great

this people does not furnish us with one single act of generosity, magnanimity or humanity; yet amidst so long and dismal a night of barbarism, there is continually breaking forth a cheering ray of universal toleration.

Jephtha, who was inspired of God, and who sacrificed to him his daughter, says to the chief of the Amorites, “ Wilt not thou possess that  
 “ which Chemosh thy God giveth thee to possess? so whomsoever the Lord our God  
 “ shall drive from before us, them will we possess †.” This declaration is express, and might be carried to a great length; however,

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great danger or distress, offered up the most favourite of their children, and that Ilus sacrificed his son Jehud much about the same time, that God made the trial of Abraham's faith. It is very difficult to penetrate into the dark recesses of early antiquity; but it is too melancholy a truth that these horrible sacrifices were almost every where in use: and men have laid them aside, only in proportion as they have become civilized. So true is it that civilization is the nurse of humanity.

† Judges, chap. xi. ver. 24.

it is at least an evident proof that God permitted the worship of Chemosh. For the words of the holy scripture are not “*Thou thinkest* thou hast a right to possess that which thy god Chemosh giveth thee to possess;” but expressly, “*Thou hast* a right to possess, &c.” for that is the true interpretation of the Hebrew words *Otho thirafch*.

The story of Micah and the Levite, related in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of the book of Judges, is a still more incontestible proof of this extensive toleration and liberty of conscience allowed among the Jews. The mother of Micah having lost eleven hundred shekels of silver, and her son having restored them to her, she dedicated or vowed them unto the Lord, and made images with them, and she built a small chapel and hired a Levite to officiate therein for ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel and his victuals. Then said Micah, “Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing that I have a Levite to be my priest †.”

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† Judges, chap. xvii. ver. the last.



In a short time after, six hundred men of the tribe of Dan, who were in search of some town which they might seize upon as an inheritance to dwell in, came to the house of Micah, where they found the Levite officiating; and having no priest of their own with them, and thinking that on that account God would not prosper their undertaking, they seized upon the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim belonging to Micah, and also the Levite, whom they took with them in spite of all the remonstrances of the latter, and the outcries of Micah and his mother. After this, full of assurance of success, they went and fell upon the city of Laish, and smote all the inhabitants with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city to the ground, as was their usual custom; they then built them another city, and called its name Dan †, in remembrance of their victory; and they set up Micah's graven image; and what is more remarkable, Jonathan, the grandson of Moses, was a priest of the temple, wherein the God of Israel and the idol of Micah, were both worshipped at the same time.

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† Judges, chap. xviii. ver. 11—29.

After the death of Gideon, the Israelites worshipped Baal-Perith for upwards of twenty years, and abandoned the worship of the true God, without any punishment being inflicted upon them for it, either by their chiefs, their judges, or their priests. This, I must confess, was a very heinous crime; but then, if even this idolatry was tolerated, how great must have been the differences of the true worship?

There are some persons, who, in support of non-toleration, bring us the authority of God himself; who, having suffered his ark to fall into the hands of the Philistines in the day of battle, punished them only by afflicting them with an inward distemper, resembling the hæmorrhoids or piles, by breaking in pieces the statue of their god Dagon, and by sending a number of rats to devour the fruits of their lands. But when the Philistines, in order to appease his wrath, sent back the ark drawn by two cows that gave milk to their calves, and made an offering to the Lord of five golden rats, and the like number of golden hæmorrhoids, the Lord smote seventy of the Elders of Israel, and fifty thousand of the people, for having looked upon the ark. To this it may be answered, that the judgment of  
God

God was not, on this occasion, directed against any particular belief, any difference in worship, or idolatry.

If God had meant to punish idolatry, he would have destroyed all the Philistines who had attempted to seize upon his ark, and who were worshippers of the idol Dagon; whereas we find him smiting with death fifty thousand and seventy of his own people, for having looked upon his ark, which they ought not to have looked upon. So much did the laws and manners of those times and the Jewish dispensation differ from every thing that we know, and so inscrutable are the ways of God to us! “The rigorous punishment,” saith the learned Doctor Calmet, “inflicted on such a multitude of persons on this occasion, will appear excessive only to those who do not comprehend how greatly God would have himself feared and respected among his chosen people, and who judge of the ways and designs of Providence only by the weak lights of their own reason.”

Here then God punished the Israelites, not for any strange worship, but for a profanation



of his own; an indiscreet curiosity, a disobedience of his precepts, and perhaps an inward rebellious spirit. It is true, that such punishments appertain alone to the God of the Hebrews, and we cannot too often repeat, that those times and manners were altogether different from ours.

Again, we find some ages after, when the idolatrous Naaman asked of Elijah, if he might be allowed to follow his king up to the temple of Rimmon, and bow down himself there with him; this very Elijah, who had before caused the little children to be devoured by bears only for mocking him, answered this idolater, “Go in peace §.”

But this is not all; we find the Lord commanding Jeremiah to make him bonds and yokes, saying, “Put them upon thy neck †,

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§ Kings, b. iv. ch. v. ver. 25.

† Those who are unacquainted with the customs of antiquity, and who judge only from what they see about them, may possibly be astonished at this odd command; but they should reflect, that at those times it was the custom in Egypt, and most  
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“ and fend them to the kingdom of Edom, and  
 “ to the king of Moab, and to the king of the

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part of Affyria, to exprefs things by hieroglyphical figures, figns, and types.

The prophets, who were called *Seers* by the Egyptians and Jews, not only expreffed themselves in allegories, but alfo represented by figns thofe events which they foretold. Thus we find Ifaiah, the chief of the four great prophets, taking a roll and writing therein Maher-Shalal-Hashbaz, that is, Make hafte to the fpoil : and going unto the prophetefs, ſhe conceived and bare a fon, whom the Lord called Maher-Shalal-Hashbaz †. This is a type of the evils which were to be brought upon the Jews by the people of Egypt and Affyria.

The prophet alfo fays, “ Before that the child  
 “ ſhall be of an age to eat butter and honey, to re-  
 “ fufe the evil and chufe the good, the land that  
 “ they abhorred ſhall be delivered of both her  
 “ kings ; and the Lord will hiſs to the flies of  
 “ Egypt, and for the bees of Afyr, and the Lord  
 “ will ſhawe with a razor that is hired, the beard  
 “ and the hair of the feet of the king of Affyria‡.”

† Ifaiah, ch. viii. ver. 1 and 4. ‡ Id. ch. vii. v. 15---18.

“ Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to  
 “ the king of Zidon;” and he did so; bidding the

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This prophecy of the bees, and of the shaving of the beard, and of the hair of the feet, can be understood only by those who know that it was a custom to call the swarms of bees together by the sound of a flagelet or pipe, or some other rustick instrument; that the greatest affront that could be done to any man, was to cut off his beard; and that the hair on the private parts was called the hair of the feet, which was never shaven but in cases of leprosy, or other unclean disorders. All these figures, which would appear so strange in our stile, signify nothing more than that the Lord will, in the course of a few years, deliver his people from captivity.

We find the same prophet walking naked and barefoot, to shew that the king of Assyria shall lead away the Egyptians and Ethiopians captives, without their having wherewithal to cover their nakedness ||.

The prophet Ezekiel eats the roll of parchment which God had given him: afterwards he eats his bread covered with excrement, and continues to lie on his left side three hundred and ninety

|| Isaiah, chap. xx.

days



messenger say to them in the name of the Lord,  
 “ I have given all your lands into the hand of

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days, and forty days on his right side, to show that the Jews should want bread, and as a type of the number of years they were to remain in captivity. He loads himself with chains, as a figure of those which they are to wear; and he cuts off the hair of his head and of his beard, and divides them into three parts; the first of these portions is a type of those who are to perish in the city of Jerusalem; the second, of such who are to be slain without the walls; and the third, of those who are to be carried away to Babylon †.

The prophet Hosea takes to himself a woman who is an adultress, and whom he purchases for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer and a half of barley, and says unto her, “ Thou shalt abide  
 “ for me many days, thou shalt not play the harlot,  
 “ and thou shalt not be for another man, for so  
 “ shall the children of Israel abide many days  
 “ without a king, and without a prince, and without  
 “ an image, and without an ephod, and without  
 “ Teraphim §.” In a word, the seers or prophets scarcely ever foretel any thing without using a type or sign of the thing foretold.

† Ezekiel, chap. iv. seq.

§ Hosea, chap. iii.

“ Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, my ser-  
vant

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Jeremiah therefore only conformed to the usual custom, when he bound himself with cords, and put bonds and yokes upon his neck, as figures of the approaching slavery of those to whom he sent them, and, if we attend properly to these things, we shall find the times here spoken of to be like those of an old world, differing in every thing from the new society. The laws, the manner of making war, were all absolutely different; and if we only open Homer and the first book of Herodotus, we need nothing more to convince us that there is not the least resemblance between the people of early antiquity and us; hence we ought to distrust our own judgment, when we attempt to compare their manners with ours. Even nature herself is not now the same as she was then; magicians and forcerers had at that time a power over her which they no longer possess; they enchanted serpents, they raised the dead out of their tombs, &c. God sent dreams, and men interpreted them. The gift of prophecy was common. And we read of several metamorphoses, such as of Nebuchadnezzar into an ox, of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, and of five whole cities changed in an instant into a burning lake.

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“vant †.” Here then we have God declaring an idolatrous prince his servant and favourite.

The same prophet having been cast into the dungeon by order of the Jewish king Zedekiah, and afterwards released by him, advises him in

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There were likewise several species of men that no longer exist. The race of giants, Rephaim, Emim, Nephilim, and Enacim, have totally disappeared. St. Augustin, in his fifth book *de civitate Dei*, says, that he saw a tooth of one of those ancient giants, that was at least an hundred times as large as one of our grinders. Ezekiel speaks of pigmies (*Gamadim*) not above a cubit high, who fought at the siege of Tyre; and almost all writers, sacred and profane, have agreed in the truth of these relations.

In fine, the antient world was so different from ours, that there is no drawing any rule for our conduct from it; and if in the earliest ages of antiquity we find mankind mutually persecuting and destroying each other on account of their different faiths, far be it from us, who live under the enlightened law of grace, to copy after such originals.

† Jer. xxvii. xxviii.

the



the name of God, to submit himself to the king of Babylon, saying, "If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, thy soul shall live." God therefore takes part with an idolatrous king, and delivers into his hands his holy ark, the looking upon which only, had cost the lives of fifty thousand and seventy jews; and not only so, but also delivers up to him the Holy of Holies, together with the rest of the temple, the building of which had cost a hundred and eight thousand talents of gold, one million seventeen thousand talents of silver, and ten thousand drachmas of gold, that had been left by David and his great officers, for building the house of the Lord; which, exclusive of the sums expended for that purpose by king Solomon, amounts to the sum of nineteen milliards, sixty-two millions, or thereabouts of the present currency. Never sure, was idolatry so nobly rewarded. I am sensible that this account is exaggerated, and that it seems to be an error of the copyist. But if we reduce the sum to one half, to a fourth, or even to an eighth part, it will still be amazing. But Herodotus's account of the treasures which he himself saw in the temple of Ephesus, is not less surprising.

sing. In fine, all the riches of the earth are as nothing in the sight of God; and the title of *my servant*, with which he dignified Zebuchadnezzar, is the true and invaluable treasure.

Nor does God show less favour to Kyr, or Cosroes, whom we call Cyrus, and whom he calls his *Christ*, his *anointed*, though he never was anointed according to the general acceptance of that word, and was moreover a follower of the religion of Zoroaster, and an usurper in the opinion of the rest of mankind; yet him he calleth his *shepherd* †; and we have not in the whole Sacred Writings, so great an instance of divine predilection.

We are told by the prophet Malachi, that  
 “From the rising of the sun even unto the  
 “going down of the same, the name of God  
 “shall be great among the Gentiles; and in  
 “every place a pure offering shall be offered  
 “unto his name †.” God takes as much care  
 of the idolatrous Ninevites, as of his chosen

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† Isai. ch. xlv. and xlv. † Malach. chap. i.  
 ver. 1.

Jews. Melchezideck, though no Jew, was the high-priest of the living God. Balaam, though an idolater, was his prophet. The Holy Scripture then teaches us, that God not only tolerated every other religion, but also extended his fatherly care to them all. And shall we, after this, dare to be persecutors?

CHAP.



## C H A P. XIII.

The Great TOLERATION exercised among  
the JEWS.

THUS then, under Moses, the Judges, and the Kings, we find numberless instances of toleration. Moreover, we are told by Moses, that "God will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation." This threat was necessary to a people to whom God had not revealed the immortality of the soul, and the rewards and punishment of a future state. These truths are not to be found in any part of the Decalogue, nor in the Levitic, or Deuteronomic law. They were the tenets of the Persians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Cretans; but made no part of the Jewish religion. Moses does not say, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest inherit *eternal* life;" but "that thy days may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee:" that is, in this life; and the punishments with which he threatens them, regard only the present mortal state; such as being smitten with the scab and with the itch; with  
blast-

blasting and with mildew; that they shall betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her; that they shall build houses, and others shall dwell therein; that they shall plant vineyards, and shall not gather the grapes thereof; that they shall eat the fruit of their own bodies, the flesh of their sons, and of their daughters, and be obliged to bow down before the stranger that is within their gates †: but he never tells them that their souls are immortal, and shall taste of felicity or punishment after death. God, who conducted his people himself, punished or rewarded them immediately according to their good or evil deeds. Every thing relating to them was temporal, and this the learned bishop Warburton brings as a proof of the divine origin of the Jewish law †; inasmuch,

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† Deut. chap. xxviii. ver. 28. & seq.

† There is but one passage in the whole Mosaic law, from which one might conclude that Moses was acquainted with the reigning opinion among the Egyptians, that the soul did not die with the body. This passage is very particular, and is in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy: "There shall not be found among you any one that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an inchanter,

" or

says he, as God being their king, and exercising justice immediately upon them, according to

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“ or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with  
“ familiar spirits (Python), or a wizard, or a ne-  
“ cromancer.” From this passage it appears, that  
by invoking the souls of the dead, this pretended  
necromancy supposed a permanency of the soul.  
It might also happen, that the necromancers of  
whom Moses speaks, being but ignorant deceiv-  
ers, might not have a distinct idea of the magic  
they operated. They made people believe that  
they forced the dead to speak, and by the power  
of their art restored the body to the same state as  
when living; without once examining whether  
their ridiculous operations might authorise the  
doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The an-  
tient magicians were never philosophers, they  
were at best but a set of stupid jugglers, who  
played their tricks before illiterate spectators.

But what is very strange and worthy of obser-  
vation is, that the word Python should be found  
in Deuteronomy, so long before that Greek term  
was known to the Hebrews; and indeed, this word  
is not to be found in the Hebrew, of which we  
have never had a good translation.

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their transgression or obedience, found it not necessary to reveal to them a doctrine which he reserved for after-times, when he should no longer so obediently govern his people. Those who through ignorance pretend, that Moses taught the immortality of the soul, deprived the New-Testament of one of its principal advantages over the Old. It is certain, that

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There are many insurmountable difficulties in this language: it is a mixture of Phœnician, Egyptian, Syriac, and Arabic, and has undergone many alterations to the present time. The Hebrew verbs had only two moods, the present and the future: the rest were to be guessed at by the sense. The different vowels were frequently expressed by the same characters, or rather indeed they were not expressed at all; and the inventors of points have only increased the difficulties they meant to remove. Every adverb had twenty different significations, and the same word had frequently several contrary senses. Add to this, that the language was in itself very dry and barren; for the Jews, not being acquainted with the arts, could not express what they knew nothing of. In a word, the Hebrew is to the Greek what the language of a pedant is to that of an academic.

the

the law of Moses taught only temporal punishments, extending to the fourth generation ; and yet, notwithstanding the positive declaration of God delivered in this law, Ezekiel preached the very contrary to the Jews ; telling them ; “ The son shall not bear the iniquities of the father § § ;” and in another place he goes

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§ Ezek. chap. xviii. ver 20.

§ The opinion of Ezekiel was at length the prevailing one of the synagogue ; not but that there were always some Jews, who, tho’ they believed in a state of eternal punishments, yet believed at the same time that God punished the sins of the fathers upon the children. At present indeed they are punished even beyond the fiftieth generation, and yet are in danger of eternal punishment. It may be asked how the offspring of those Jews who were not concerned in putting Christ to death, can be temporally punished in the persons of their children who were as innocent as themselves ? This temporal punishment, or rather this manner of living, so different from all other people, and of trading over the whole earth without having any country of their own, cannot be considered as a punishment compared with what they are to expect hereafter on account of their unbelief, and which they might avoid by a sincere repentance.

so far as to make God say, “ that he had given  
 “ them statutes that were not good, and judg-  
 “ ments whereby they should not live §.”

Notwithstanding these contradictions, the book of Ezekiel was not the less admitted into the number of these inspired writers: it is true, that according to St. Jerom, the synagogue did not permit the reading of it till after thirteen years of age; but that was for fear their youth should make a bad use of the too lively descriptions in the sixteenth and twenty-third chapters of the whoredoms of Aholah and Aholibah.

But when the immortality of the soul became to be a received doctrine†, which was probably

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§ Ezek. chap. xx. ver. 25.

† Those who have thought to discover the doctrine of Hell and Heaven, such as it is now believed by us, in the Mosaic books, have been strangely mistaken: their error is owing entirely to an idle dispute about words: the Vulgate having translated the Hebrew word *Sheol*, the pit, by the Latin word *infernus*, and this latter having been rendered in French by *enfer*, hell, they have taken occasion from



about the beginning of the Babylonish captivity, the sect of Sadducees still continued to be-

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from this equivocal translation to establish a belief that the ancient Hebrews had a notion of the *Hades* and *Tartaros* of the Greeks, known to other nations before them by different appellations,

We are told in the sixteenth chapter of Numbers, that the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, and they and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit or grave; now certainly there is nothing said in this passage concerning the souls of these three persons, nor yet of the torments of Hell, nor of eternal punishments.

It is very extraordinary that the authors of the *Dictionnaire Encyclopedique* under the word *Hell* (*Enfer*) should say, that the ancient Hebrews believed in its existence. If this is true, there would be an insurmountable contradiction in the Pentateuch; for why should Moses have spoken of the punishments after death in one single passage only, of all his works? On this occasion they quote the thirty second chapter of Deuteronomy; but after a mutilated manner. The whole passage is as follows:

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“They

lieve, that there were no rewards or punishments after death, and that the faculties of the

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“They have moved me to jealousy with that  
“which is not God, they have provoked me to  
“anger with their vanities, and I will move them  
“to jealousy with those that are not a people, I  
“will provoke them to anger with a foolish na-  
“tion. For a fire is kindled in my anger, and  
“shall burn unto the lowest Hell; and shall con-  
“sume the earth with her increase, and set on fire  
“the foundations of the mountains. I will heap  
“mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows  
“upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger,  
“and devoured with burning heat and with bitter  
“destruction; I will also send the teeth of beasts  
“upon them, with the poison of serpents of the  
“dust.”

But have any or all these expressions the least relation to the idea of hell-torments? On the contrary, it seems as if these words were purposely inserted to prove that our hell was unknown to the antient Jews.

The author of this article quotes also the following passage from the twenty-fourth chapter of Job,  
“The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight,  
“saying, no eye shall see me, and disguiseth his  
“face

soul perished with us in like manner as those of the body. They also denied the existence of

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“ face. In the dark they dig through houses which  
 “ they had marked for themselves in the day time.  
 “ They know not the light, for the morning is to  
 “ them as the shadow of death ; if one know them,  
 “ they are in the terrors of the shadow of death.  
 “ He is swift as the waters, their portion is cursed  
 “ in the earth, he beholdeth not the way of the  
 “ vineyards. Drowth and heat consume the snow-  
 “ waters, so doth the grave those who have sinned.”

I quote these passages entire, otherwise it will be impossible to form a true idea of them. But let me ask if there is the least expression here, from which one may conclude, that Moses ever taught the Jews the clear and simple doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments ?

Not to mention that the book of Job has nothing to do with the Mosaic law, there is great reason to believe that Job himself was not a Jew ; this is the opinion of St. Jerom in his Hebrew questions upon Genesis. The word Satan, which occurs in Job, was not known to the Jews, nor is it any where to be found in the five books of Moses. This name as well as those of Gabriel and Ra-



angels. In a word they differed much more from the other Jews, than the Protestants do

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phael, were entirely unknown to the Jews before their captivity in Babylon. It would appear then that Job is very improperly quoted in this place.

But the last chapter of Iſaiah is likewise brought in, where it is ſaid, “ And it ſhall come to paſs, “ that from one new moon to another, and from “ one ſabbath to another, ſhall all fleſh come to “ worſhip before me, ſaith the Lord. And they “ ſhall go forth and look upon the carcaſes of the “ men that have tranſgreſſed againſt me; for their “ worm ſhall not die, neither ſhall their fire be “ quenched, and they ſhall be an abhorring unto “ all fleſh.”

Certainly, the caſting out of theſe bodies to the view of all paſſengers, even to abhorring, and their being eaten by worms, can never mean that Moſes taught the Jews the doctrine of the immortality of the ſoul; and the words, “ The fire ſhall “ not be quenched,” can as little ſignify that the bodies ſo expoſed to public view, were to ſuffer eternal torments in hell.

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from the Catholics ; nevertheless, they lived in peaceable communion with their brethren ; and

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How can any one quote a passage in Isaiah, to prove that the Jews in the time of Moses had adopted the doctrine of the immortality of the soul ? According to the Hebrew computation, Isaiah prophesied about the year of the world three thousand three hundred and eighty. Moses lived about the year 2500 therefore there was a distance of eight centuries between the one and the other ; now it is an insult upon common sense, a downright mockery, thus to abuse the license of quoting, by pretending to prove, that a writer was of this or that opinion, from a passage in another writer who lived eight hundred years after him, and who has not even made any mention of such opinion. It is beyond contradiction, that the immortality of the soul, and rewards and punishments after death, are clearly and positively expressed, and declared in the New-Testament, and it is equally certain, that nothing concerning them is to be found in any one part of the five books of Moses.

Notwithstanding that the Jews did afterwards embrace this doctrine ; they were far from having a proper idea of the spirituality of the soul ; they

some of their sect were admitted to the high priesthood.

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thought in common with most other nations, that the soul was an uncompounded aërial light substance, that retained the appearance of the body it had formerly animated; and hence came the term apparition, manes of the dead. Several fathers of the church were of the same opinion. Tertullian, in his twenty-second chapter, *De Animâ*, expresses himself thus: “*Definimus animam Dei flatu*  
 “*natam, immortalem, corporalem, effigiatam,*  
 “*substantia simplicem;*” that is, “We define the  
 “soul a substance, formed by the breath of God;  
 “of an immortal, corporeal, figurative, and sim-  
 “ple nature.”

St. Ireneus in the thirty-fourth chapter of his second book, says, “*Incorporales sunt animæ quan-*  
 “*tum ad comparitionem mortalium corporum,*”  
 “souls are incorporeal in comparison of mortal  
 “bodies.” Adding, “Christ has taught us, that  
 “the soul retains the image of the body;” “*Ca-*  
 “*racterem corporum in quo adoptantur, &c.*”  
 Christ does not appear ever to have taught such a doctrine, and it is difficult to understand what St. Ireneus means in this passage.

St.



St. Hilary, in his commentary on St. Matthew, is still more exprefs and positive; he roundly asserts the soul to have a corporeal substance, “*Corpoream naturæ suæ substantiam fortiuntur.*”

St. Ambrose on Abraham, book ii. chap viii. will have it that there is nothing free from matter, unless it be the substance of the Blessed Trinity.

These reverend fathers seem to have been very indifferent philosophers; but there is the greatest reason to believe, that their divinity was in the main very sound; inasmuch, as notwithstanding their ignorance of the incomprehensible nature of the soul, they asserted it to be immortal, and endeavoured to make it Christian.

We know that the soul is of a spiritual nature, but we do not all know what spirit is. We are very imperfectly acquainted with matter, nor is it possible for us to have a distinct idea of what is not matter. Hardly capable of understanding what effects our senses have, we cannot of ourselves know any thing of what surpasses the bound of those senses. We carry some few words of our common language into the inexorable depths of metaphysics and divinity, in order to acquire some slight idea of those things, which we could never conceive or express; and

we use those words as props to support the steps of our feeble understandings, in traveling through those unknown regions.

Thus we make use of the word spirit, which is the same as breath or air, to express something which is not matter ; and this word breath, air, spirit, inspiring us insensibly with an idea of an uncompounded and light substance, we still refine upon this as much as possible in order to obtain a proper conception of pure and simple spirituality ; but we shall never be able to obtain a distinct notion of this : we do not even know what we say, when we pronounce the word substance ; in its literal signification, it signifies something beneath, and thereby shews us that it is incomprehensible ; for what is meant by that which is beneath ? The knowledge of the secrets of God is not to be acquired in this life. Plunged as we are in mortal obscurity, we fight against each other, and strike at random in the darkness with which we are surrounded, without precisely knowing for what we are fighting.

If mankind would consider all this with attention, every reasonable person will be ready to conclude, that we ought to have the greatest indulgence for the opinions of others, and by our conduct endeavour to merit the same from them.

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The Pharisees held fatality or predestination\*,  
and

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The above remarks are not at all foreign to the principal point in question, which is to know whether men are bound to tolerate each other; inasmuch, as by proving that in all times those of different opinions have been alike mistaken, it appears to have been the duty of all mankind in every age, to treat each other with kindness and forbearance.

\* The doctrine of predestination is both of long standing and universal; we find it in Homer. Jupiter was desirous to save the life of his son Sarpedon; but destiny had marked him for death, and Jupiter was obliged to submit. Destiny was with the philosophers either the necessary concatenation of causes and effects necessarily produced by nature, or that same concatenation ordained by providence; the latter of which is most reasonable. We find the whole system of fatality, or predestination comprized in this line of Annæus Seneca: "Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt." It has been always acknowledged, that God governs the universe by eternal, universal, and immutable laws: this truth gave rise to the many



and believed in the Metempsychosis §, the Essenians thought that the souls of the just went

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unintelligible disputes concerning free-will, which had never been defined before the great philosopher Locke arose, who has proved it to be the power of acting. God bestows this power, and man acting freely according to the eternal decrees of Providence, is one of the wheels of the great machine of the universe. Free will has been a subject of disputation from all antiquity ; but no one 'till of late times, was ever persecuted on this subject. How horrible, how absurd is it to have imprisoned and banished on account of this dispute, a Pomponne d'Andilly, an Arnaud, a Nicole, a Sacy, and so many others who were the shining lights of France ?

§ The Theological Romance of the Metempsychosis came from India, a part of the world to which we are indebted for many more fables than is generally believed. We find this doctrine explained by that beautiful poet Ovid, in the twelfth book of his Metamorphoses. It has been received in almost every part of the world, and has every where met with its opposers : nevertheless, we do not find that any priest among the ancients ever procured a disciple of Pythagoras to be sent to prison.

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into some happy islands ‡, and those of the

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‡ Neither the ancient Jews, the Egyptians, nor the Greeks, their cotemporaries, believed that the soul of man went to heaven after death. The Jews thought, that the sun and moon were placed some leagues above us in the same circle, and that the firmament was a thick and solid vault, which supported the weight of the waters, that however sometimes ran out through the crevices in this vault. The ancient Greeks placed the palace of their gods upon mount Olympus. And the abode of heroes after death, was in Homer's time thought to be in an island beyond the ocean. This likewise was the opinion of the Essenians.

After Homer, planets were assigned to the gods ; but there was no more reason for men to place a god in the moon, than for the inhabitants of the moon to place a god in our planet of the earth. Juno and Iris had no other palaces assigned them but the clouds, where there was no place to rest the sole of their feet. Among the Sabeans, every deity had its star. But as the stars are little suns, it would be impossible to live there, without partaking of the nature of fire. Upon the whole, then, it is very needless to enquire what the ancients thought of heaven ; since the best answer that can be given is, they thought nothing about it.

wicked

wicked into a kind of Tartarus or Hell. They offered no sacrifices; and assembled together in particular synagogues of their own. In a word if we examine nicely into the Jewish oeconomy we shall be surprized to find the most extensive toleration prevailing amidst the most shocking barbarities. This is indeed a contradiction, but almost all people have been governed by contradictions. Happy are those whose manners are mild, while their laws are bloody!

## CHAP.



## C H A P. XIV.

If NON-TOLERATION was taught by CHRIST.

**L**ET us now see whether Christ established sanguinary laws, whether he enjoined non-toleration, instituted the horrors of the inquisition, or the butchery of an Auto-da-fé.

There are, unless I am much mistaken, very few passages in the New-Testament from which the spirit of persecution can have inferred that tyranny and constraint in religious matters are permitted: one is the parable, wherein the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king who made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to invite guests to the wedding, saying, “tell them which were bidden, “my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all “things are ready, come unto the marriage||.” But those that were bidden, made light of the invitation, one going to his farm, and another to his business; and the rest of them took the king’s servants and slew them. Upon which

|| Matth. ch. xxii. v. 1—13.]

he

he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city. After this he sent out into the highways, to invite all that could be found to come to the marriage ; but one of the guests happening to sit down to table without a wedding-garment, the king ordered him to be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness.

But it is clear, that this allegory relates only to the kingdom of heaven ; therefore, assuredly no man can assume a right from thence to fetter or imprison his neighbour who should come to dine with him, without being properly dressed ; nor do I believe, that history furnishes us with any instance of a prince causing one of his courtiers to be hanged upon such an occasion : and there is little reason to apprehend, that when the emperor sends his pages to any of the princes of the empire to invite them to an entertainment, those princes should fall upon the pages and kill them.

The invitation to the marriage feast, is a type of the preaching of the gospel ; and the murder of the king's servants, is figurative of the persecution of those who preach wisdom and virtue.

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The other parable is that of a private person who made a great supper, to which he invited many of his friends †, and when he was ready to sit down to table, sent his servants to tell them that all things were ready; but one excused himself by saying, that he had bought a piece of ground, and must needs go and see it; an excuse which was not admissible, as no one goes to visit their lands in the night time; another said he had bought five yoke of oxen, and was going to prove them; he was as much to blame as the other, since no one would go to prove oxen at supper time: the third said he had married a wife, and could not come; this last was certainly a very good excuse. The master of the house being very angry at this disappointment, told his servants to go into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and the maimed, the halt, and the blind; this being done, and finding that there was yet room, he said unto his servant, “Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them” “(that you find) to come in.”

It is true, that we are not expressly told that this parable is a type of the kingdom of heaven, and the words “compel them to come in,”

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† St. Luke, Chap. xiv.



have been perverted to very bad purposes ; but it is very evident, that one single servant could not *forcibly* compel every person hemet to come and sup with his master ; besides, the company of people so compelled would not have made the supper very agreeable. “ Compel them to come in,” therefore, means nothing more, according to commentators of the best reputation, than pray, desire, press them to come in ; therefore what connection, for heaven-sake, can prayers and invitations have with persecution ?

But to take things in a literal sense, is it necessary to be maimed, halt, and blind, or to be compelled by force to enter into the bosom of the church ? Christ says in the same parable, “ When thou makest a dinner, or a supper, call “ not thy friends nor thy brethren, nor thy rich “ kinsmen ;” but did any one ever infer from thence, that we should never dine or sup with our friends or kinsmen, if they happen to be worth money ?

Our Saviour, after this parable of the feast, says, “ if any man come to me and hate not “ his father and mother, his wife and children, “ his brethren and sisters, yea, and his own “ life also, he cannot be my disciple, &c.” But

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is there any person living so unnatural to conclude from hence, that he ought to hate his father and mother and his nearest relations ? And is it not evident to one of the meanest capacity, that the true interpretation of these words is, hesitate not between me, and your dearest affections ?

The following passage in the eighth chapter of St. Matthew is also quoted ; “ Whosoever “ heareth not the word of God shall be like to “ an heathen, and like one who sitteth at the “ receipt of custom ;” but certainly, this is not saying that we ought to persecute all unbelievers and custom-house officers ; they are frequently cursed indeed, but they are not delivered up to the arm of secular power. And so far from depriving the latter of any part of the prerogatives of citizens, they are indulged with the greatest privileges ; and though their profession is the only one condemned in scripture, it is of all others the most protected and favoured by every government. Why then should not we show some indulgence to our brethren who are unbelievers, while we load with benefits our brethren the tax-gatherers ?

Another passage which has been grossly abused, is that in St. Matthew and St. Mark, where we are told that Jesus being hungry in the morning, and coming to a fig-tree which had no leaves, (for it was not the time of figs) Jesus cursed the tree, and it immediately dried up.

This miracle has been explained several different ways; but not one of them appears to authorize persecution. Tho' a fig-tree could not be expected to bear fruit in the beginning of March, yet we find it blasted: but is that a reason why we should blast our brethren with affliction in all seasons of the year? When we meet with any thing in holy writing that may occasion doubts in our vain and inquisitive minds, we should pay it all due reverence, but let us not make use of it to countenance cruelty and persecution.

The spirit of persecution which perverts every thing, has also strained in its own vindication the story of Christ driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and that of his sending a legion of devils out of the body of the man possessed with an evil spirit into two thousand unclean animals; but cannot any one perceive, that these two instances were no other



other than acts of justice, which God himself deigned to execute for a contravention of his law ? It was a disrespect shewn to the house of the Lord, to change his dwelling into a market for buyers and sellers. And although the Sanhedrim and his priests might permit this traffic for the greater convenience of their sacrifices ; yet the God to whom these sacrifices were offered, might, doubtless, though under a human shape, overturn this profane practice. In the same manner might he punish those who brought into the country whole troops of those animals which were prohibited by that law, of which he himself deigned to be an observer. These two examples then have not the least connection with persecution for religion-sake ; and the spirit of non-toleration must certainly be founded upon very false principles, when it every where seeks such idle pretexts.

Christ, in almost every other part of his gospel both by his words and actions, preaches up mildness, forbearance, and indulgence. Witness the father who receives his prodigal son ; and the workman who comes at the last hour, and yet is paid as much as the others ; witness the charitable Samaritan ; and Christ himself, who

who excuses his disciples for not fasting ; who pardons the woman who had sinned ; and only recommends fidelity for the future to the woman caught in adultery. He even condescends to partake of the innocent mirth of those who are met at the marriage feast in Cana, and who being already warmed with wine, and wanting still more, Christ is pleased to perform a miracle in their favour, by changing their water into wine. He is not even incensed against Judas, who he knew to be about to betray him ; he commands Peter never to make use of the sword, and reprimands the sons of Zebedee, who, after the example of Elias, wanted to call down fire from heaven to consume a town in which they had been refused a lodging. In a word, he himself died a victim to malice and persecution ; and, if one might dare to compare God with a mortal, and sacred things with prophane, his death, humanly speaking, had a great resemblance to that of Socrates. The Greek philosopher suffered by the hatred of the sophists, the priests and the heads of the people ; the Christian law-giver by that of the Scribes, Pharisees and priests. Socrates might have avoided death, but would not : Christ offered himself a voluntary sacrifice. The Greek philosopher not only pardoned his false accusers and

and iniquitous judges, he even desired them to treat his children as they had done himself, should they be one day happy enough, like him, to deserve their hatred. The Christian law-giver, infinitely superior to the heathen, besought his father to forgive his enemies. If Christ seemed to fear death, and that the agonies he was in at its approach, drew from him sweat mixed with blood, which is the most violent and rare of all symptoms, it was because he condescended to submit to every weakness of the human frame which he had taken upon him ; his body trembled, but his soul was unshaken. By his example we may learn, that true fortitude and greatness consist in supporting those evils at which our nature shrinks. It is the height of courage to meet death at the same time that we fear it.

Socrates accused the sophists of ignorance, and convicted them of falsehood : Jesus, in his Godlike character, accused the Scribes and Pharisees of being hypocrites, blind guides and fools, and a race of vipers and serpents.

Socrates was not accused of attempting to found a new sect ; nor was Christ charged with endeavouring to introduce a new one. We are told



told in St. Matthew, that the great men and the priests, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death.

Now, if they were obliged to seek for false witnesses, they could not charge him with having preached openly against the law; besides, it was evident, that he complied in every respect with the Mosaic law, from his birth to his death. He was circumcised the eighth day like other Jewish children; he was baptized in Jordan, agreeable to a ceremony held sacred among the Jews, and among all the other people of the east. All impurities of the law were cleansed by baptism; it was in this manner their priests were consecrated at the solemn feast of the expiation, every one plunged himself in the water, and all new-made proselytes underwent the same ceremony.

Moreover, Jesus observed all the points of the law; he feasted every sabbath-day, and he abstained from forbidden meats; he kept all the festivals, and even before his death, he celebrated that of the passover; he was not accused of embracing any new opinion, nor of observing any strange rites. Born an Israelite, he always lived as an Israelite.

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He was accused indeed by two witnesses, of having said that he could destroy the temple, and build it up again in three days; a speech altogether unintelligible to the carnal Jews, but which did not amount to an accusation of seeking to found a new sect.

When he was examined before the high-priest, this latter said to him, "I command you, in the name of the living God, to tell us if thou art Christ, the son of God." We are not told what the high-priest meant by the son of God. This expression was sometimes made use of to signify a just or upright man\*, in the

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\* It was indeed very difficult, not to say impossible, for the Jews to comprehend, without an immediate revelation, the ineffable mystery of the incarnation of God, the son of God. In the sixth chapter of Genesis, we find the sons of great men called "the sons of God." In like manner the royal Psalmist calls the tall cedars, "the cedars of God." Samuel says, "the fear of God fell upon the people;" that is, a violent fear seized them. A great tempest is called the wind of the Lord, and Saul's distemper, the melancholy of the Lord. Nevertheless, the Jews seemed to

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have

same manner as the words son of Belial, to signify a wicked person. The carnal Jews had no idea of the sacred mystery of the son of God, God himself, coming upon earth.

Jesus answered the high-priest, “ thou hast said; nevertheless, I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven †.”

This answer was looked upon by the whole assembly as a blasphemy. But the Sanhedrim having no longer the power of life and death, they falsely accused Jesus before the Roman governor of the province, of being a disturber of the public peace, and one who said they should

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have clearly understood that our Saviour called himself the son of God in the proper sense of that word; and if they looked upon this as a blasphemous expression, it is an additional proof of their ignorance of the incarnation, and of God, the son of God, being sent upon earth for the redemption of mankind.

† Matthew, chap. xxvi. ver. 61—64.

not



not pay tribute to Cæsar; and moreover, called himself king of the Jews. It is therefore incontestibly evident, that he was accused of a crime against the state.

Pilate being informed that he was a Galilean, sent him immediately to Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee. This latter thinking it impossible that a person of Jesus's appearance should pretend to be the head of a party, or aspire to royalty, treated him with great contempt, and sent him back again to Pilate, who had the infamous weakness to condemn him to death, as the only means to appease the tumult raised against himself; more especially as he had lately experienced the revolt of the Jews, as we are told by Josephus. On this occasion Pilate did not show the same generosity which the governor Festus did afterwards.

I now desire to know, whether toleration or non toleration appears to be of divine prescription? Let those who would resemble Christ, be martyrs, and not executioners.

## C H A P. XV.

## TESTIMONIES against PERSECUTION.

**I**T is an impious act to deprive men of liberty in matters of religion, or prevent them from making choice of a God. No God nor man would be pleased with a forced service. (*Apologetic* chap. xxiv.)

Was violence to be used in defence of the faith, the bishops would oppose it. (*St. Hilarius*, lib. i.)

Religion when forced ceases to be religion; we should persuade and not compel. Religion cannot be commanded. (*Lactantius*, lib. iii.)

It is detestable heresy to endeavour to bring over by violence, bodily punishments, or imprisonments, those whom we cannot convince by reasoning. (*St. Athanasius*, lib. i.)

Nothing

Nothing is more contradictory to true religion than constraint. (*St. Justin Martyr, lib. v.*)

Is it for us to persecute those whom God tolerates? said St. Augustin, before his dispute with the Donatists had soured his disposition.

Let no violence be done to the Jews. (*The 56th Canon of the 4th Council of Toledo.*)

Advise but compel not. (*St. Barnard's Letters.*)

We do not pretend to overcome error by violence. (*Speech of the Clergy of France to Lewis XIV.*)

We have always disapproved of rigorous measures. (*Assembly of the Clergy, August 11, 1560.*)

We know that faith may yield to persuasion, but it never will be controuled. (*Flehier bishop of Nime's Letter, 19.*)

We ought to abstain even from reproachful speeches. (*Bishop Balley's Pastoral Letters.*)



Remember that the diseases of the soul are not to be cured by restraint and violence. (*Cardinal Camus' Pastoral Instructions for the Year 1688.*)

Indulge every one with civil toleration. (*Archbishop Fenelon to the Duke of Burgundy.*)

Compulsion in religion proves the spirit, which dictates it to be an enemy to truth. (*Dirois, a Doctor of the Sorbonne, b. vi. chap. iv.*)

Compulsion may make hypocrites, but never can persuade. (*Tellement's Hist. Eccles. tom vi.*)

We have thought it conformable to equity and right reason, to walk in the paths of the antient church, which never used violence to establish or extend religion. (*Remonstrance of the Parliament of Paris to Henry II.*)

Experience teaches us, that violence is more likely to irritate, than to cure a distemper which is seated in the mind. — (*De Thou's Epistle Dedicatory to Henry IV.*)

Faith is not inspired by the edge of the sword. (*Ceresier in the Reigns of Henry IV. and Lewis XIII.*)

It is a barbarous zeal which pretends to force any religion upon the mind, as if persuasion could be produced by constraint. (*Boulaingvillier's State of France.*)

It is with religion as with love; command can do nothing, constraint still less; nothing is so independent as love and belief. (*Amelot de la Houssaie on Cardinal Ossatt's Letters.*)

If providence has been so kind to you as to give you a knowledge of the truth, receive it as an instance of his great goodness; but should those who enjoy the inheritance of their father hate those who do not? (*Spirit of Laws, book xxv.*)

One might compose an immense volume of such passages. All our histories, discourses, sermons, moral treatises, and catechisms of the present time, abound with, and inculcate this holy doctrine of indulgence. What fatality, what false reason, then leads us to contradict, by our practice, the theory we are every day

teaching? When our actions give the lie to our morals, it must certainly proceed from our thinking it our interest to practise the contrary of what we teach; but what advantage can arise from persecuting those who do not think in the same manner as we do, and thereby making ourselves hated by them? Once more then, let me repeat it, there is the highest absurdity in persecution. It may be replied, that those who found it their interest to lay a restraint upon the consciences of others are not absurd in so doing. To such men I address the following chapter.

## C H A P.



## CHAP. XVI.

A CONVERSATION between a DYING MAN,  
and one in good Health.

**A**N inhabitant of a country village, lying at the point of death, was visited by a person in good health, who came to insult him in his last moments with the following speech.

Wretch that thou art ! think as I do this instant, sign this writing immediately, confess that five propositions are to be found in a book that neither thou nor I have ever read ; adopt immediately the opinion of Lanfranc against Berengarius, and of St. Thomas against St. Bonaventure ; join with the council of Nice against the council of Frankfort ; and explain to me out of hand, how the words, “ My father is greater than me,” signify exactly, “ I am as great as him.” Tell me also in what manner the father communicates all his attributes to the son, excepting the fatherhood ; or I will have thy body thrown to the fowls of the air, thy children deprived of their inheritance, thy wife of her dowry, and thy family turned out to beg  
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their

their bread, which shall be refused them by those who are like myself.

DYING MAN.

I scarce understand what you say; your threats strike my ears confusedly, they trouble my mind, and render my last moments terrifying. In the name of God have pity on me!

CRUEL MAN.

Pity! I can have none for thee, unless thou art exactly of my opinion.

DYING MAN.

Alas! you must be sensible that in these my last moments, my senses are all impaired, the doors of my understanding are shut, my ideas are lost in confusion, and I have hardly any sentiments remaining. Am I then in a condition to dispute?

CRUEL MAN.

Well then, if thou canst not believe as I would have thee, only say that you do, and that will content me.

DYING

## DYING MAN.

How! would you have me perjure myself, to please you, when I am going in an instant to appear before the judgment-seat of that God who is the avenger of perjury?

## CRUEL MAN.

No matter; thou wilt have the pleasure to be interred in holy ground, and thy wife and children will have wherewithal to maintain them after thy death. Die an hypocrite: hypocrisy is a very good thing; I have heard say, it is the homage which vice pays to virtue. A little hypocrisy, friend, can't cost you much?

## DYING MAN.

Surely, you must either not acknowledge a God, or hold him very cheap, since you require me to tell a lie with my last breath, when you yourself must soon appear in judgment before him, and answer for that lie.



CRUEL MAN.

Insolent wretch ! dost thou say that I do not acknowledge a God ?

DYING MAN.

Pardon me, brother, I rather fear you do not know him. The God whom I adore, lends me at this time an increase of strength, to tell you with my dying words, that if you believe in him, you ought to behave towards me with charity. He has given me my wife and children, do not you make them perish with misery. As for my body, do with it as seems good to you ; I leave it at your disposal ; but let me conjure you to believe in God.

CRUEL MAN.

Come, come, truce with your reasoning, and do as I bid you ; I will have it so ; I command you to do it.

DYING MAN.

But what advantage can you have in thus tormenting me ?

CRUEL

## CRUEL MAN.

What advantage! why, if I can make you sign, it will be worth a good canonship to me.

## DYING MAN.

Ah! brother; my last moment approaches; I am expiring; but I will pray to God to touch your heart, that you may be converted.

## CRUEL MAN.

The devil take the impertinent puppy he has not signed after all! Well, I'll e'en sign for him, it is but a little forgery.

The following letter is a confirmation of the above doctrine.

C H A P.

## C H A P. XVII.

A LETTER from a Beneficed Priest, to Father  
LE TELLIER, the Jesuit, dated the 6th of  
May, 1714.

Reverend Father,

THE following is in obedience to the orders I received from your reverence, to lay before you the most effectual means for delivering Jesus and his company from their enemies.

I believe there may be remaining at this time in the kingdom not more than five hundred thousand Hugonots, some say a million, others a million and a half; but let the number be what what it will, the following is my advice; which, however, as in duty bound, I submit with all humility to your reverence's judgment.

In the first place then, it will be very easy to seize in one day all the preachers, and to hang them all at one time and in one place, which  
will

will not only be a very edifying, but also a very entertaining exhibition to the people.

Secondly, I would have all the fathers and mothers who are heretics murdered in their beds, because the killing them in the streets might occasion some little disturbance; besides, by that means several of them might escape, which is above all to be prevented. This execution is a necessary corollary of our principles; for if we ought to kill a heretic, as so many of our great divines have incontestably proved, it is evident, that we ought to kill them all without exception.

Thirdly, I would the very next day, marry all the daughters to good catholics, inasmuch as it would not be politic to depopulate the state so much after the late war; but as for the boys of fourteen and fifteen years of age, who have already imbibed bad principles, which we cannot hope to root out, 'tis my opinion that they should be all castrated, to prevent the race from being ever reproduced. As for the other younger lads, they may be brought up in our colleges, where they may be whipped till they have learnt by heart the works of Sanchez and Molinos.

Fourthly,



Fourthly, I think, under correction, the same method ought to be taken with all the Lutherans of Alsace, for I remember in the year 1704, to have seen two old women of that country laugh on the day of our defeat at Blenheim.

Fifthly, What relates to the Jansenists will perhaps appear a little more difficult: I believe their numbers may amount to about six millions, a little more or less; but this ought not to give any alarm to a person of your reverence's disposition. I reckon among the Jansenists all the parliaments who have so unworthily maintained the liberties of the Gallican church. I leave it to your reverence to weigh with your usual prudence, the most effectual methods for reducing these turbulent spirits. The gun-powder plot failed of the desired success, thro' the weakness of one of the conspirators, who wanted to save the life of his friend; but, as your reverence has no friend, the same inconvenience is not to be apprehended; you may very easily blow up all the parliaments in the kingdom with the composition called Pulvis Pyrius, invented by the monk Schwartz. By my calculation, it will require upon an average thirty-six barrels of powder for each of the parliaments; now if we multiply thirty-six

six, the number of barrels, by twelve, the number of parliaments, it will make four hundred and thirty-two barrels, which, at a hundred crowns per barrel, will amount to not quite a hundred and thirty thousand livres; a mere trifle for the reverend father-general.

The parliaments thus disposed of, you may bestow their places upon your congregationists, who are perfectly well versed in the laws of the realm.

Sixthly, It will be a very easy matter to poison the cardinal de Noailles, who is a very simple unsuspecting man.

Your reverence may take the same steps for conversion with several of the refractory prelates; and their bishoprics, by a brief from the pope, may be put into the hands of the Jesuits: thus all the bishops that remain being staunch to the good cause, and they making a proper choice of curates, I, with your reverence's permission, would give the following advice:

Seventhly and lastly, As the Jansenists are said to take the sacrament one time in the year at least, which is at Easter, it would not be amiss

amiss to season the consecrated wafers with a little of that drug which was used to do justice upon the emperor Henry VII. Some nice cavalier may perhaps tell me, that in this operation we may run some risque in poisoning the Molinists at the same time; there is some weight in this objection: but then it should be considered, that there is no project without its inconveniencies; nor any system but what threatens destruction in some part. And if we were to be stopped by these little difficulties, we should never attain our end in any thing; besides, as here we have in view the obtaining the greatest of all possible advantages, we should not suffer ourselves to be shocked, though it brings with it some bad consequences, especially as those consequences are of little or no consideration.

And after all, we shall have nothing to reproach ourselves with, since it is proved, that the Reformed, as they call themselves, and the Jansenists, have all of them their portion in hell; therefore, we only put them in possession of their inheritance a little the sooner.

It is as evident, that heaven belongs of right to the Molinists; therefore by destroying them  
by

by mistake, and without any evil intention, we hasten their happiness; and are in both cases the ministers of Providence.

As to those who may be a little shocked at the number to be thus made away with, your reverence may remark to them, that from the first flourishing days of the church, to the year 1707, that is to say, in about fourteen hundred years, religion has occasioned the massacre of upwards of fifty millions of persons; whereas by my proposal, not above six millions and a half will be put to death by the halter, the dagger, or poison.

But perhaps it may be objected, that my calculation is not just, and that I have committed an error against the Rule of Three; inasmuch, as, that if in fourteen hundred years, there perished fifty millions of souls, on account of some trifling disputes in divinity, that makes only thirty-five thousand seven hundred and fourteen, and some little fraction in a year, and consequently, that by my method an overplus of six millions sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty-five and some fractions, are put to death in the current year. But indeed, this a very childish quibble: nay, I'll even call it impious: for



for is it not plain, that by my method, I save the lives of all the Catholics, so long as the world shall last? But in short, there would be no end of answering every frivolous objection.

I am,

With the most profound Respect,

Reverend Father,

Your Reverence's

Most humble,

Most devout

And most humane R——

Native of Angoulême,

Prefect of the Congregation.

This glorious scheme however could not be carried into execution, because it required a considerable time to make the necessary dispositions, and that father Le Tellier was banished the year following. But as it is right to examine both sides of an argument, it will be proper to enquire in what cases it may be lawful to follow in part the scheme of the reverend father's

father's correspondent. It would seem rather too severe to execute it in all its parts: let us therefore examine in what cases we ought to break upon the wheel, to hang, or to make galley slaves of those who differ from us in opinion. This shall be the subject of the following chapter.

## CHAP.

The only CASES in which NON-TOLERATION  
makes Part of the Human Law.

**F**OR a government not to have a right to punish men for their errors, it is necessary that those errors should not be crimes; and they are crimes only when they disturb the public tranquillity; which they do whenever they inspire enthusiasm: it is necessary therefore that men should begin by laying aside enthusiasm, in order to deserve toleration.

If a number of young Jesuits, knowing that the church holds all reprobates and heretics in detestation, and that the opinion of the Jansenists having been condemned by a bull, this sect is consequently reprobate; thereupon go and set fire to the house of the fathers of the oratory, because Quesnel one of that body was a Jansenist; it is clear, that the government would be obliged to punish those Jesuits.

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In like manner, if these latter have been found to teach the most reprehensible doctrines, and if their institution appears contrary to the laws of the kingdom, it becomes necessary to abolish their society, and of Jesuits to make them useful citizens: which, in fact, so far from being an oppression upon them, as has been pretended, is a real good done them; for where is the great oppression of being obliged to wear a short coat instead of a long gown, or to be free instead of being a slave? In time of peace, whole regiments are broke without complaining; why then should the Jesuits make such an outcry, when they are broke for the sake of peace?

Were the Franciscans, in a transport of holy zeal for the Virgin Mary, to go and pull down the church of the Dominicans, who hold Mary to have been born in original sin, the government would then be obliged to treat the Franciscans much in the same manner it has done the Jesuits.

The same argument will hold good with regard to the Lutherans and Calvinists; for let them say, if they please, we follow the dictates of our consciences, it is more profitable  
to



to obey God than man; we are the only true flock, and therefore ought to cut off all the wolves. It is evident that in this case they themselves are the wolves.

One of the most astonishing examples of enthusiasm, was in a little sect of Denmark, founded on one of the best principles in the world; for these people endeavoured to procure the eternal happiness of all their brethren: but the consequences of this principle were very singular. As they believed that all the young children who died without baptism were damned, and that those who had the happiness to die immediately after the receiving that sacrament, enter into eternal happiness, they went forth and murdered all the young children of both sexes lately baptized whom they could meet with; by this action, they doubtless procured the little innocents the greatest of all felicity, by preserving them at once from sin, the miseries of this life, and hell, and sending them infallibly to heaven. But these people, in the excess of their charitable zeal, did not consider that it is forbidden to do evil that good may come thereof; that they had no right over the lives of these infants; that the greatest part of fathers

thers and mothers are so carnal, as to desire rather to keep their children about them, than to see their throats cut, though it was to send them to heaven ; and lastly, that it is the duty of the magistrate to punish murder, though committed with a good intent.

It should seem that the Jews had the greatest right of any persons to rob and murder us : for although the Old Testament abounds with examples of toleration and indulgence, yet are there several instances of the contrary, and some very severe laws. God did at times command his people to kill all idolaters, reserving only the young women fit for the nuptial state : they look upon us as idolaters ; and notwithstanding that we at present tolerate them, they might certainly, had they the power in their hands, cut us all off, excepting our young women.

Moreover, they would be under an indispensable obligation to exterminate the whole Turkish race ; this speaks itself ; for the Turks are at present in possession of the countries of the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, &c. &c. All which people were laid under a curse, and all their

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coun-

country, which was about five and twenty leagues in extent, was given to the Jews by several successive covenants ; consequently they ought to resume possession of their own, which the Turks have usurped from them for upwards of a thousand years. But if the Jews were to reason in this manner now-a-days, it is pretty certain we should make them no other answer, but by impaling them alive.

These are the only cases in which persecution appears reasonable.

## C H A P. XIX.

ACCOUNT of a Controversial Dispute which  
happened in CHINA.

**I**N the beginning of the reign of the great emperor Cam-hi, a mandarin of the city of Canton hearing a great noise and outcry in the house adjoining to that he dwelt in, sent to know if they were murdering any one; but was told that it was only a Danish almoner, a Dutch chaplain, and a Jesuit disputing together; upon which he ordered them to be brought before him, and enquired of them the occasion of their quarrel?

The Jesuit, who was the first that spoke, said, that it was a very grievous thing to him, who was always in the right, to have to do with people who were always in the wrong; that he had at first began to reason with them with the greatest coolness; but that, at length, he could not but own his patience had left him.

The mandarin then represented to all three, with all imaginable candour, how necessary it



was to observe decorum and good manners even in disputation; he told them that no one ever gave way to heats or passion in China, and desired to be informed of the nature of their dispute?

My lord, said the Jesuit, I take you for judge in this affair. These two gentlemen refuse to submit to the decisions of the council of Trent.

I am surpris'd at that, replied the Mandarin. Then turning towards the two refractory parties, Gentlemen, said he, you ought to shew a deference to the opinion of a great assembly; I do not know what the council of Trent is; but a number of persons must always have opportunities of knowing better than one single man. No one ought to imagine that he knows more than all others, and that reason dwells only with him: this is the doctrine of our great Confucius; therefore, if you would take my advice, abide by what the council of Trent has decreed.

The Dane then began to speak in his turn. Your Excellence, said he, has delivered yourself with great wisdom and prudence: we have all that respect for great assemblies that we ought;

ought ; and accordingly we submit entirely to the opinions of several councils that were held at the same time with that of Trent.

Oh ! if that is the case, said the Mandarin, I ask your pardon, you may doubtless be in the right. So then, it seems you and the Dutchman are of one opinion against the Jesuit.

Not in the least, answered the Dutchman, this man here (pointing to the Dane) entertains notions almost as extravagant as those of the Jesuit, who pretends to so much mildness before you. 'Sblood ! there is no bearing this with patience.

I cannot conceive what you mean, said the Mandarin ; are you not all three Christians ? are you not all three come to teach the Christian religion in our empire ? and ought you not consequently to have all the same tenets ?

You see how it is, my lord, said the Jesuit : these two men here, are mortal enemies to each other ; and yet both of them dispute against me ; this makes it clear, that they are both in the wrong, and that reason is on my side.

I do not think it so very clear, replied the Mandarin, for it may very well happen that you are all three in the wrong. But I should be glad to hear your arguments singly.

The Jesuit then made a long discourse, while the Dutchman and the Dane at every period shrugged up their shoulders, and the Mandarin could not make any thing of what he heard. The Dane now took the lead in his turn, while his two adversaries looked upon him with manifest signs of contempt; and the Mandarin, when he had finished, remained as wise as before. The Dutchman had the same success. At length they began to talk all three together, and broke out into the most scurrilous revilings. The honest Mandarin could hardly get in a word; at length he dismissed them, saying, If you expect to have your doctrine tolerated here, begin by shewing an example of it to each other.

At leaving the house, the Jesuit met with a Dominican missionary, to whom he related what had passed; and told him, that he had gained his cause; for you may be assured, added he, that truth will always prevail. The Dominican

can replied, Had I been there, friend, you would not so easily have gained your cause; for I should have proved you to be an idolater and a liar. Upon this, there arose a violent dispute between them; and the Jesuit and the Friar went to fifty-cuffs. The Mandarin being informed of this scandalous behaviour, ordered them both to be sent to prison. A sub-mandarin asked his Excellence, how long he would please to have them remain in confinement? Till they are both agreed, said the judge. Then, my lord, answered the sub-mandarin, they will remain in prison all their days. Well then, said the Mandarin, let them stay till they forgive one another. That they will never do, rejoined the deputy, I know them very well. Indeed! said the Mandarin; then let it be till they appear so to do.



## C H A P. XX.

Whether it is of Service to indulge the People  
in SUPERSTITION.

SUCH is the weakness and perversity of the human race, that it is undoubtedly more eligible for them to be subject to every possible kind of superstition, provided it is not of a bloody nature, than to live without religion. Man has always stood in need of a curb; and though it was certainly very ridiculous to sacrifice to fauns, satyrs, and naiads, yet it was more reasonable and advantageous to adore even those fantastic images of the Deity, than to be given up to atheism. An atheist of any capacity and invested with power, would be as dreadful a scourge to the rest of mankind, as the most bloody enthusiast.

When men have not true notions of the Deity, false ideas must supply their place, like as in troublesome and calamitous times, we are obliged to trade with base money when good is not to be procured. The heathens were afraid of committing crimes, lest they should be punished

ed by their false gods. The Malabar dreads the anger of his pagods. Wherever there is a fixed community, religion is necessary; the laws are a curb upon open crimes, and religion upon private ones.

But when once men have embraced a pure and holy religion, superstition then becomes not only needless, but very hurtful. Those whom God has been pleased to nourish with bread, ought not to be fed upon acorns.

Superstition is to religion what astrology is to astronomy, the foolish daughter of a wise mother. These two daughters however have for a long time governed this world with uncontrollable sway.

In those dark and barbarous times amongst us, when there were hardly two feudal lords who had a New-Testament in their houses, it might be pardonable to present the common people with fables; I mean those feudal lords, their ignorant wives, and brutish vassals. They were then made to believe, that St. Christopher carried the child Jesus on his shoulders from one side of the river to the other: they were entertained with stories of witches and witchcraft; they readily believed that St. Genou

cured the gout, and St. Clara fore eyes. The children believed in hobgoblins, and their fathers in St. Francis' girdle; and relicks swarmed out of number.

The common people have continued to be infected with the rust of these superstitions, even after religion became more enlightened. It is well known that when Mr. de Noailles, bishop of Chalons, ordered the pretended relick of the holy navel to be taken away and thrown into the fire, the whole city of Chalons joined in a prosecution against him, but he, who had resolution equal to his piety, soon brought the people of his diocese to believe, that one may adore Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth, without having his navel in a church.

Those whom we call Jansenists were not a little instrumental in rooting out by degrees, from the minds of the greatest part of the nation, the many absurd notions which were the disgrace of our holy religion. And it no longer continued to be thought sufficient to repeat the prayer of thirty days to the blessed Virgin, to obtain whatever one should ask, and sin with impunity.

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At length, the lower kind of people began to imagine, that it was not St. Geneviève who gave rain or caused it to cease, but God himself, who disposed the elements according to his good will and pleasure. The monks have been astonished to find their saints no longer perform miracles ; and if the writers of the life of St. Francis Xavier were to come again into the world, they would not venture to assert that their saint raised nine people from the dead ; that he was at one and the same time, both on the sea and on shore ; or that a crab brought him his crucifix, which he had dropped out of his hand into the water. .

It has happened much the same with regard to excommunications. Our French historians tell us, that when king Robert was excommunicated by pope Gregory V. for having married the princess Bertha, who was his god-mother, his domestics threw all the victuals that came from his table out of the windows, and that his queen Bertha was delivered of a goose, as a punishment for this incestuous alliance. It is not likely that the pages of the presence to a king of France now-a-days, would throw his dinner into the streets if he should be excommunicated ; nor would it be very readily be-



lieved, that the queen was brought to bed of a bird.

If there are some few Convulsionists yet to be met with in an obscure corner of the town, it is a kind of lousy disease that infects only the dregs of the people. Reason is every day making her way into the tradesman's counting-house, as well as into the palaces of our nobility. It behoves us then to cultivate the fruits of this reason, more especially as it is impossible to prevent them from sprouting forth. France, after having been enlightened by a Pascal, a Nicole, an Arnaud, a Bossuet, a Descartes, a Gassendi, a Bayle, a Fontenelle, and other bright geniuses, like them, is no longer to be governed as in the times of Garasse and Mênôt.

If the masters of error, I mean the great masters who were so long time prayed to and revered for brutalizing the human species, were at present to enjoin us to believe that the seed must rot in the earth before it can sprout, that this earth continues immoveable on its basis, without revolving about the sun; that the tides are not the natural effect of gravitation;  
that

that the rainbow is not formed by the refraction and reflections of the rays of light, &c. and were they to bring certain passages of Scripture badly understood, and worse interpreted, to authenticate their ordinances, how would they be looked upon by every person of common capacity? Would fools be thought too harsh a name to be imposed upon them? But if they should have recourse to compulsion and persecution to establish their insolent ignorance, would not madmen and butchers be deemed a proper appellation?

The more that monkish superstition becomes contemptible, the more bishops are respected, and the clergy in general esteemed. They do good in their professions; whereas the monkish superstition of foreign climates occasioned a great deal of mischief. But of all superstitions, that of hating our neighbour on account of his opinion, is surely the most dangerous! And will it not be granted me, that there would be more sense and reason in adoring the holy navel, the holy prepuce, and the milk, and the robe of the Blessed Virgin, than to detest and persecute our brother?

## C H A P. XXI.

VIRTUE is better than LEARNING.

**T**HE fewer dogmas, the fewer disputes; and the fewer disputes, the fewer calamities: if this is not true, I am much mistaken.

Religion is instituted to make us happy in this life and the next. But what is required to make us happy in the life to come? To be just: And in this? To be merciful and forbearing.

It would be the height of madness to pretend to bring all mankind to think exactly in the same manner in regard to metaphysics. We might, with much greater ease, subject the whole universe by force of arms, than subject the minds of all the inhabitants of one single village.

But Euclid found no difficulty in persuading every one of the truths of geometry; and why? because there is not one of them which is not a self-evident corollary on this simple axiom; "Two and two make four." But is it not  
alto-

altogether the same with relation to the complicated maxims in metaphysics and divinity.

Eusebius and Socrates tell us, that when bishop Alexander and Arius the priest, began first to dispute in what manner the Logos or word proceeded from the father, the emperor Constantine wrote to them in the following terms : “ You are great fools to dispute  
“ about things you do not understand.”

If the two contending parties had been wise enough to acknowledge that the emperor was in the right, Christendom would not have been drenched in blood for upwards of three centuries.

And indeed what can be more ridiculous, or rather detestable, than to address mankind in this manner ? “ My friends, it is not sufficient that you are faithful subjects, dutiful  
“ children, tender parents, and upright neighbours ; that you live in the continual practice of virtue ; that you are grateful, benevolent, and generous, and worship the Saviour  
“ of the world in peace ; it is furthermore required of you, that you should know how  
“ a thing



“ a thing may be begotten from all eternity,  
 “ without being made from all eternity; and  
 “ if you cannot distinguish the homouision in  
 “ the hypostasis, we declare to you that you  
 “ are damned to all eternity; and in the mean  
 “ time we shall begin by cutting your throats.”

If such a decision as this had been presented to Archimedes, Possidonius, Varro, Cato, or Cicero, what answer do you think they would have said of it?

Constantine, however, did not persevere in silencing the two parties; he might easily have sent for the chiefs of the disputes before him, and have demanded of them by what authority they disturbed the peace of mankind: “Are you,  
 “ he might have said, possessed of the genealogy of the heavenly family? What is it to you  
 “ whether the son was made or begotten, provided that you are faithful to him; that you  
 “ preach a sound doctrine, and practise that  
 “ doctrine if you can? I have committed many  
 “ faults in my life-time, and so have you:  
 “ I have been ambitious, so have you: it has  
 “ cost me many falsehoods and cruelties to attain to the empire; I have murdered my  
 “ nearest

“nearest relations that stood in my way; but  
 “I now repent, and am willing to make a-  
 “tonement for my crime by restoring peace to  
 “the Roman empire; do not you prevent me  
 “from doing the only good action which can  
 “possibly make my former cruel ones forgot-  
 “ten; but rather assist me to end my days in  
 “peace.” Perhaps Constantine might not, by  
 this speech, have prevailed over the minds of the  
 disputants, and perhaps he might rather be  
 pleased with presiding in a council in a long  
 crimson robe, and his forehead glittering with  
 jewels.

This however opened a passage to all those  
 dreadful calamities which over-run the West  
 from Asia. Out of every contested verse  
 there issued a fury armed with a quibble  
 and a poniard, who inspired mankind at once  
 with folly and cruelty. The Huns, the Heruli,  
 the Goths and Vandals, who came afterwards,  
 did infinitely less mischief; and the greatest  
 they did, was that of afterwards engaging in  
 the same fatal disputes.

## C H A P. XXII.

## Of UNIVERSAL TOLERATION.

**I**T does not require any great art or studied elocution, to prove that Christians ought to tolerate each other. Nay, I shall go still farther, and say, that we ought to look upon all men as our brethren. How ! call a Turk, a Jew, and a Siamese, my brother ? Yes, doubtless ; for are we not all children of the same parent, and the creatures of the same creator ?

But these people hold us in contempt, and call us idolaters ! Well then, I should tell them that they were to blame. And I fancy that I could stagger the headstrong pride of an Iman, or a Talapoin, was I to address them in the following manner :

“ This little globe, which is no more than a  
 “ point, rolls together with many other globes,  
 “ in that immensity of space in which we are  
 “ all alike confounded. Man, who is an ani-  
 “ mal, about five feet high, is certainly a very  
 “ in-

“ inconsiderable part of the creation ; but one of  
 “ those hardly visible beings, says to others of  
 “ the same kind inhabiting another spot of the  
 “ globe, hearken to me, for the God of all these  
 “ worlds has enlightened me : there are about  
 “ nine hundred millions of us little insects who  
 “ inhabit the earth, but my ant-hill is alone  
 “ cherished by God, who holds all the rest in  
 “ horror and detestation ; those who live with  
 “ me upon my spot will alone be happy, and  
 “ all the rest eternally wretched.”

They would here stop me short and ask,  
 What madman could have made so ridiculous  
 a speech ? I should then be obliged to answer  
 them, It is yourselves. After which, I should  
 endeavour to pacify them, but perhaps that  
 would not be very easy.

I might next address myself to the Christians,  
 and venture to say, for example, to a Domini-  
 can, one of the judges of the inquisition,  
 “ Brother, you know that every province in  
 “ Italy has a jargon of its own, and that they  
 “ do not speak at Venice and Bergamo as they  
 “ do at Florence. The academy de la Crusca  
 “ has fixed the standard of the Italian language ;  
 “ its dictionary is an unerring rule, and Buon  
 “ Mater’s



“ Matei’s grammar is an infallible guide, from  
 “ neither of which we ought to depart ; but do  
 “ you think that the president of the academy,  
 “ or in his absence Buon Matei, could in  
 “ conscience order the tongues of all the Vene-  
 “ tians and Bergamese, who persisted in their  
 “ own country dialect, to be cut out ?”

The inquisitor would perhaps make me this  
 reply ; “ There is a very wide difference ;  
 “ here the salvation of your soul is concerned ;  
 “ and it is entirely for your good that the di-  
 “ rectory of the inquisition ordains that you  
 “ shall be seized, upon the deposition of a  
 “ single person, though of the most infamous  
 “ character ; that you shall have no person to  
 “ plead for you, nor even be acquainted with  
 “ the name of your accuser : that the inquisitor  
 “ shall promise you favour, and afterwards  
 “ condemn you ; that he shall make you un-  
 “ dergo five different kinds of torture, and  
 “ that at length you shall be either whipt, sent  
 “ to the gallies, or burnt at the stake † ; father  
 “ Ivouet, and the doctors Chaucalon, Zanchi-

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† See that excellent book, intituled, *The Manual  
 of the Inquisition.*

“ nus, Campegius, Royas, Felinus Gomarus,  
 “ Diarbarus, and Gemelinus are exactly of this  
 “ opinion; consequently this pious practice will  
 “ not admit of contradiction.”

To all which I should take the liberty of making the following reply: “ Dear brother,  
 “ you may perhaps be in the right, and I am  
 “ perfectly well convinced of the great benefit  
 “ you intend me; but may I not be saved  
 “ without all this?”

It is true that these horrible absurdities do not every day deform the face of the earth; but they have been very frequent, and one might easily collect instances enough to make a volume much larger than that of the holy gospels, which condemns such practices. It is not only very cruel to persecute in this short life, those who do not think in the same manner as we do, but I very much doubt if there is not an impious boldness in pronouncing them eternally damned. In my opinion, it little befits such insects of a summer's day, as we are, thus to anticipate the decrees of Providence. I am very far from opposing that maxim of the church, that “ out of her pale there is no salvation:” on the contrary, I respect that and every other  
 part

part of her doctrine; but, after all, can we be supposed to be intimately acquainted with the ways of God, or to fathom the whole depth of his mercy? Is it not permitted us to hope in him, as well as to fear him? Is it not sufficient if we are faithful sons of the church, without every individual presuming to wrest the power out of the hand of God, and determine, before him, the future destiny of our fellow creatures?

When we wear mourning for a king of England, Denmark, Sweden, or Prussia, do we say that we are in mourning for a damned soul that is burning in hell? There are about forty millions of inhabitants in Europe who are not members of the church of Rome; should we say to every one of them, "Sir, as I look upon you  
"to be infallibly damned, I shall neither eat,  
"drink, converse, nor have any connections  
"with you?"

Is there an ambassador of France, who when he is presented to the Grand Seignior for an audience, will seriously say to himself, his sublime highness will infallibly burn to all eternity, for having submitted to be circumcised? If he really thought that the Grand Seignior was  
a mortal

a mortal enemy to God, and the object of divine vengeance, could he converse with such a person; nay indeed, ought he to be sent to him? But how could we carry on any commerce, or perform any of the civil duties of society, if we were convinced that we were conversing with persons destined to eternal damnation?

O ye different worshippers of a God of mercy! if ye have cruel hearts, if, while you adore that Deity who has placed the whole of his law in these few words, "Love God and your neighbour." You have loaded that pure and holy law with sophistical and unintelligible disputes, if you have lighted the flames of discord sometimes for a new word, and at others for a single letter only; if you have annexed eternal punishment to the omission of some few words, or of certain ceremonies, which other people cannot comprehend, I must say to you with tears of compassion for mankind: "Transport yourselves with me to that great instant in which all men are to receive judgment from the hand of God, who will then do unto every one according to their works, and with me behold all the dead of past ages appearing in his presence. Are you very sure that our  
" hea-



“heavenly father and creator will say to the  
 “ wise and virtuous Confucius, to the great le-  
 “ gislator Solon, to Pythagoras, Zaleucus,  
 “ Socrates, Plato, the divine Antoninus, the  
 “ good Trajan, to Titus the delight of hu-  
 “ man kind, and to many others who have  
 “ been the models of human kind : Depart  
 “ from me, wretches ! into torments that  
 “ know neither alleviation nor end ; but are,  
 “ like himself, everlasting. But you, my well-  
 “ beloved servants, John Chatel, Ravailac,  
 “ Cartouche, Damiens, &c. who have died  
 “ according to the rules prescribed by the  
 “ church, enter thou into the joy of your Lord,  
 “ and sit for ever at my right-hand in majesty  
 “ and glory !”

Methinks I see you start with horror at these  
 words ; however, as they have escaped me, let  
 them pass ; I shall say nothing more to you.

## C H A P XXIII.

## AN ADDRESS to the DEITY.

**N**O longer then do I address myself to men, but to thee, God of all beings, of all worlds, and of all ages; if it may be permitted weak creatures, lost in immensity, and imperceptible to the rest of the universe, to presume to petition thee for ought, who hast given plenty of all things, and whose decrees are immutable as eternal. Deign to look with an eye of pity upon the errors annexed to our natures! let not these errors prove the sources of misery to us! Thou hast not given us hearts to hate, nor hands to kill each other; grant then that we may mutually aid and assist each other to support the burthen of this painful and transitory life! May the trifling differences in the garments that cover our frail bodies, in the mode of expressing our insignificant thoughts, in our ridiculous customs, and our imperfect laws, in our idle opinions, and in our several conditions and situations, that appear so disproportionate in our eyes, and all are equal in

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thine.

thine; in a word, may the slight variations that are found amongst the atoms called men, not be made use of by us as signals of mutual hatred and persecution! May those who worship thee by the light of tapers at noon-day, bear charitably with those who content themselves with the light of that glorious planet thou hast placed in the midst of the heavens! May those who dress themselves in a robe of white linen to teach their hearers that thou art to be loved and feared, not detest or revile those who teach the same doctrine in long cloaks of black wool! May it be accounted the same to adore thee in a dialect formed from an antient or a modern language! May those, who, cloathed in vestments of crimson or violet colour, rule over a little parcel of that heap of dirt called the world, and are possessed of a few round fragments of a certain metal, enjoy without pride or insolence what they call grandeur and riches, and may others look on them without envy; for thou knowest, O God, that there is nothing in all these vanities proper to inspire envy or pride.

May all men remember that they are brethren! may they alike abhor that tyranny which seeks to subject the freedom of the will, as they do the rapine which tears from the arms of industry

try the fruits of its peaceful labours ! And if the scourge of war is not to be avoided, let us not mutually hate and destroy each other in the midst of peace ; but rather make use of the few moments of our existence to join in praising, in a thousand different languages, from one extremity of the world to the other, thy goodness, O all merciful creator, to whom we are indebted for that existence !



## C H A P. XXIV.

## P O S T S C R I P T.

**W**HILE I was employed in writing this treatise, purely with a desire to make mankind more benevolent and charitable, another author was using his pen to the very contrary purpose; for every one has his particular way of thinking. This writer has published a small code of persecution, under the title of, "The harmony of religion and humanity:" but this last word seems to be an error of the press, and should be read "Inhumanity."

The author of this holy libel takes St. Augustine for his example and authority, who, after having preached up charity and forbearance, afterwards taught the doctrine of persecution, because he then had the upper hand, and was naturally of a changeable disposition. He also quotes Mr. Bossuet, the bishop of Meaux, who persecuted the famous Fenelon archbishop of Cambray, whom he accused of having said in print, that God was well worthy to be loved for his own sake.

I will

I will readily grant, that Bossuet was a very eloquent writer; and it must also be confessed, that the bishop of Hippo † is frequently inconsistent, and in general, more dry and barren than the rest of the African writers; and I must take the liberty of addressing them both in the words of Armanda, in Moliere's Learned Ladies, "If we would imitate any person, it certainly should be in the most pleasing part of their character." I should say to the bishop of Hippo: "My lord, as you have had two opinions, your lordship will be kind enough to suffer me to abide by your first, since I really think it the best."

To the bishop of Meaux I shall say, "My lord, you are certainly a very great man, and, in my opinion, have to the full as much learning as St. Augustine, and are far superior to him in eloquence; but then, my lord, why did you so distress your brother prelate, who had as much eloquence as yourself, though in another kind, and whose disposition was more amiable than yours?"

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† Now Bona, a town of Constantia in Africa. St. Augustine was bishop of this see above forty years. It now belongs to Algiers.

The author of this Treatise on Inhumanity, (for so I shall call it) is neither a Bossuet, nor an Augustine; but seems admirably well qualified for an inquisitor; I wish he was at the head of that noble tribunal at Goa. Besides, he is a politician, and parades it in his book with several great maxims of state. "If you have  
 "to deal with any considerable number of heretics," says he, "it will be necessary to use  
 "gentle methods, and try to bring them over  
 "by persuasion; but if they are only a few in  
 "number, then make free use of the gibbet  
 "and the galleys, you will find the advantage  
 "of it." This is the good prelate's own advice, in the 89th and 90th pages of his work.

Heaven be praised, I am an orthodox catholic, and, therefore, am in no danger of what the Hugonots call martyrdom: but if ever this bishop should come to be prime-minister, as he seems to flatter himself in his libels, I give him my promise, that I will set out for England the very day his commission is signed.

In the mean time, we ought to be thankful to Providence, that those of his principles are always wretched reasoners. This writer has not scrupled to quote Bayle among the advocates

cates for non-toleration; which is being equally sensible and honest; for, because Bayle agrees, that it is necessary to punish incendiaries and rogues, our bishop directly concludes, that we ought to persecute with fire and sword every honest and peaceable person. See page 98.

Almost the whole of his book is no other than a copy of the apology for St. Bartholomew's-day. It is the apologist himself or his echo. But be this matter as it will, it is devoutly to be wished, that neither the master nor the pupil may ever be at the head of an administration.

But if ever such a thing should come to pass, let me beg leave to present them beforehand with the following hint, in regard to a passage in the ninety-third page of the bishop's holy libel.

“ Is the welfare of the whole nation to be  
“ sacrificed to the ease of only the twentieth  
“ part ?”

Let us suppose then for once, that there are twenty Roman Catholics in France to one Hugonot, I am by no means for the Hugonots eating these twenty Catholics; but, at the same



time, is there any reason why the twenty Catholics should eat the Hugonot? Besides, why should we hinder this latter from marrying? Are there not many bishops, abbots, and monks, that have estates in Dauphiny, Gevaudan, Agde, and Carcassonne? And have not most of these, farmers to manage those estates, who do not believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation? Is it not the interest of these bishops, &c. that the farmers should have numerous families? And should one be permitted to have children that takes the sacrament in both kinds? Surely, there is neither justice nor common honesty in this!

“The revocation of the Edict of Nantes,” says my author, “has not been productive of so great inconveniencies as has been generally alledged.”

I must own if any have added to the number of bad effects that act produced, they must have greatly exaggerated; but then it is the common fault of all historians to exaggerate, as it is of all controversial writers to disguise the greatest part of those evils with which they are reproachable. But for once, let us neither pin our faith upon

upon the doctors of the Sorbonne nor the preachers of Amsterdam. Let us take for judges in this matter those who have had the best opportunities of being acquainted with what they wrote upon; and in the first place, I shall cite the count d'Avaux, ambassador from France to the States-General, during the years 1685, 1686, 1687, and 1688.

In the hundred and eighty-first page of the fifth volume of his works, he says that one man only offered to discover upwards of twenty millions of livres, that the persecuted Hugonots had found means to send out of France. Lewis XIV. in answer to this, writes to Mr. d'Avaux, "The accounts which I daily receive of the  
 "prodigious numbers of those who are con-  
 "verted, convince me, that in a short time  
 "the most obstinate will follow the example  
 "of the others."

This letter of the king's, plainly shews that he was firmly persuaded of the greatness of his power. He was accustomed to hear said to him every morning, Sire, you are the greatest monarch upon earth; you have but to declare your opinion, and the whole world will be proud to follow it. Pellisson, who had accumulated a

prodigious fortune in the place of head-clerk of the treasury, who had been three years confined in the Bastile as an accomplice with Fouquet, who, changing his religion, was from a Calvinist made a Roman, a deacon, and a beneficed priest, who composed hymns for the mass and verses to Chloe, and who had got the post of comptroller and converter in chief of the heretics; this very Pelisson, I say, used to produce every morning a long list of pretended abjurations purchased at the rate of seven or eight crowns a-piece; and made his prince believe, that he could, whenever he pleased, convert the whole Mahometan empire at the same price. In short, every one was in league to impose upon him: how then was it possible for him to avoid being deceived?

This very M. d'Avaux also acquaints the court that one Vincent kept upwards of five hundred workmen employed in the neighbourhood of Angoulême, and that it would be of great prejudice to the nation should they quit the kingdom. Tom. v. page 194.

The count likewise mentions two regiments at that time actually raising by French refugee officers for the service of the prince of Orange: he observes that the entire crews of three French ships

ships of war had deserted and entered into the same service; and that besides the two regiments above-mentioned, the prince was forming a company of cadet refugees, who were to be commanded by two refugee captains. Page 240. The same ambassador in another letter to Mr. de Segnelay, dated the 9th of May, 1686, says, "That he can no longer conceal the uneasiness it gives him to see the manufactures of France transported into Holland, where they will be established, never more to return."

Add to these incontestable evidences, the testimonies of the several intendants of the kingdom in 1698, and then let any one judge whether the revocation of the edict of Nantes has not done more harm than good, notwithstanding the opinion of the worthy author of the "Harmony of Religion and Inhumanity."

A marshal of France well known for his superior abilities, some few years ago made use of the following expression, "I know not whether the practice of dragooning may ever have been necessary, but I am sure it is very necessary to lay it aside."



And here I must confess, that I was apprehensive I had gone rather too far, in publishing the letter from a priest to father Le Tellier, in which the use of gunpowder is so humanely proposed. I said to myself, people will not believe me; they will certainly think this letter is a forged piece: but luckily my scruples were entirely eased, when in perusing the “Harmony of Religion and Inhumanity,” I came to the following Christian and charitable passage.

“The entire extirpation of the protestants in France, would not weaken that kingdom more than a plentiful bleeding would a patient of a sound constitution.” Page 149.

Here this pious minister of Christ, who, but a few pages before, says, That the protestants make about a twentieth part of the nation, is for shedding the blood of that twentieth part, and advises the operation with as much unconcern as he would the taking away two or three ounces from the arm of a plethoric person! Heaven preserve us and him from the other three twentieths!

Now if this worthy prelate is for destroying the twentieth part of the nation at one stroke,  
might

might not father Le Tellier's friend and correspondent as well have proposed the blowing up, stabbing, or poisoning the one third? Hence then it appears very probable, that such a letter was really wrote to Tellier.

Our pious author concludes upon the whole, that persecution is an excellent thing, "For," says he, "we do not find it absolutely condemned by our Saviour." Neither has our Saviour expressly condemned those who may set fire to the four corners of Paris! but is that a reason for canonizing all incendiaries?

In this manner, while the gentle voice of nature is every where pleading the cause of charity and benevolence, Enthusiasm, her avowed enemy, is continually howling against it; and while Peace opens her calm bosom to all mankind, Persecution is busied in forging weapons for their destruction. Let it be your care then, O ye princely arbiters, who have restored peace to the world, to pass sentence between the spirit of mutual love and harmony and that of discord and bloodshed.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XXV.

## SEQUEL and CONCLUSION.

ON the 7th of March, 1763, a council of state being held at Versailles, at which all the great ministers assisted, and the chancellor sat as president, Mr. de Crosne, one of the masters of requests, made a report of the affair of the Calas family with all the impartiality of a judge, and the precision of one perfectly well acquainted with the case; and with the plain truth and inspired eloquence of an orator and a statesman, which is alone suitable to such an assembly. The gallery was filled with a prodigious number of persons of all ranks, who impatiently waited the decision of the council. In a short time a deputation was sent to the king, to acquaint him that the council had come to an unanimous resolution, That the parliament of Thoulouse should transmit to them the whole account of its proceedings, together with the reasons on which it had framed the sentence condemning John Calas to be broken on the wheel; when his majesty was pleased to concur in the decree of the council.

Justice

Justice and humanity then still continue to reside amongst mankind ; and principally in the council of a king beloved, and deserving so to be ; who, with his ministers, his chancellor, and all the members of his council, have not disdained to employ their time in weighing all the circumstances relating to the sufferings of a private family with as much attention as if it had been the most interesting affair of war or peace ; whilst the judges have shewn themselves inspired by a love of equity, and a tender regard to the interests of their fellow subjects. All praise be given therefore to that merciful Being, the only giver of integrity and every other virtue !

And here we take occasion to declare, that we never had the least acquaintance with the unfortunate man who was condemned on the most frivolous evidence by the court of justice of Thoulouse, in direct contradiction to the ordonnances of our king, and the laws of all nations ; nor with his son Mark Anthony, the extraordinary manner of whose death led the judges into the error they committed ; nor with the mother, whose sufferings call aloud for compassion ; or yet with her innocent daughter, who, together with her, travelled upwards of  
fix



six hundred miles to lay their virtue and distresses at the foot of the throne.

The God in whose presence we declare this, knows that we have been actuated solely by the love of justice, mercy, and truth, in delivering our thoughts in the manner we have done on toleration, in regard to John Calas, who fell a victim to non-toleration and persecution.

We had not the least intent to offend the eight judges of Thoulouse, in saying that they were mistaken, as the council of state itself supposes them to have been : on the contrary, we have opened a way for them to vindicate themselves to all Europe, by acknowledging that equivocal circumstances, and the clamour of an headstrong and enraged populace, had biased their judgment; and by asking pardon of the widow, and repairing as much as in them lies, the ruin they have brought upon an innocent family, by adding to the number of those who succour them in their affliction. They have put the father to death unjustly, let them then be as fathers to his children, provided those children are willing to accept of this poor token of repentance from them. It would be infinitely to the honour of the judges to make such an offer,

offer, and to that of the injured family to refuse it.

But it principally behoves the *sieur* David, capitoul of Thoulouse, to set the example of remorse and penitence, who was the first to raise this persecution against innocence, and who insulted the hapless father of a family when expiring on the scaffold. This was indeed an unparalleled act of cruelty ; but as God is willing to shew mercy and forgiveness, it is the duty of mortals to pardon in like manner those who make atonement for their offences.

Having received a letter from a friend in Languedoc, dated the 20th of February, 1763, of which the following is an extract,

. . . . .

“ Your treatise on toleration appears to be  
 “ full of humanity and truth ; but I am afraid  
 “ it will rather hurt than serve the Calas family.  
 “ It may gall the eight judges who were for the  
 “ sentence, and they may apply to the parlia-  
 “ ment to have your book burnt ; besides, the bi-  
 “ gots, of which you are sensible there is always  
 “ a considerable number, will oppose the voice  
 “ of reason with the clamours of prejudice, &c”

My

My answer was as follows :

“ The eight judges of Thoulouse may, if  
“ they please, have my book burnt. It will cost  
“ them very little trouble, since the *Provincial*  
“ *Letters*, which had infinitely superior merit to  
“ any thing of mine, were condemned to the  
“ same fate. Every one, you know, is at  
“ liberty to burn in his own house such books  
“ as he does not like.

“ My treatise cannot possibly do either hurt  
“ or good to the Calas family, with whom I have  
“ not the least acquaintance. The king’s coun-  
“ cil is no less resolute than impartial : it judges  
“ according to law and equity of those things  
“ which fall properly under its cognizance ;  
“ but it will not interfere with a common  
“ pamphlet, written upon a subject altogether  
“ foreign from the affair under consideration.

“ If an hundred volumes in folio should be  
“ written in condemnation or vindication of the  
“ judges of Thoulouse, or of toleration, neither  
“ the council, nor any other court of justice  
“ would look upon these as law matters.

“ I

“ I readily agree with you that there are  
 “ numbers of enthusiasts who will set up the  
 “ cry against me, but at the same time I do  
 “ insist, that I shall have as many sensible rea-  
 “ ders who make use of their reason.

“ I hear that the parliament of Thoulouse  
 “ and some other courts of justice have a me-  
 “ thod of proceeding peculiar to themselves.  
 “ They admit fourths, thirds, and sixths of a  
 “ proof; so that with six hear-says on one  
 “ side, three on the other, and four fourths of  
 “ presumption, they frame three complete  
 “ proofs; and in consequence of this curious  
 “ demonstration, will condemn you a man to  
 “ be broke upon the wheel without mercy.  
 “ Now the least acquaintance with the art of  
 “ logic or reasoning would point out a diffe-  
 “ rent method of proceeding to them. What  
 “ we call an half proof can never amount to  
 “ more than a suspicion : but there is no such  
 “ thing in reality as an half-proof; for a thing  
 “ must either be proved or not proved : there  
 “ is no medium.

“ A million of suspicions put together can  
 “ no more frame a regular proof, than a million  
 “ of cyphers can compose an arithmetical num-  
 “ ber.

“ There



“ There are fourths of tones or sounds in  
 “ music, and these are to be expressed; but  
 “ there are no fourths in truth, nor in reason-  
 “ ing.

“ Two witnesses agreeing in the same depo-  
 “ sition, are esteemed to make a proof; but this  
 “ is not enough: these two witnesses should be  
 “ clear of all passion and prejudice, and, above  
 “ all, their testimony should be in every part  
 “ consonant with reason.

“ Suppose four persons of the most respecta-  
 “ ble appearance, were to come and swear in a  
 “ court of justice that they saw an infirm old  
 “ man take a vigorous young fellow by the  
 “ collar, and toss him out of a window, to the  
 “ distance of six or seven feet; certainly such  
 “ deponents ought to be sent to a mad-house.

“ But the eight judges of Thoulouse con-  
 “ demned John Calas upon a much more im-  
 “ probable accusation; for there was no one ap-  
 “ peared to swear that he had actually seen this  
 “ feeble old man of seventy seize a stout young  
 “ fellow of twenty-eight, and hang him up.  
 “ Indeed certain enthusiastic wretches said, that  
 “ they had been told by other enthusiasts like  
 them-

“ themselves, that they had been told by some  
 “ of their own sect, that they had heard that  
 “ John Calas had by a supernatural strength  
 “ overcome his son and hanged him. And  
 “ thus was the most absurd of all sentences pas-  
 “ sed upon the most absurd of all evidence.

“ In fine, there is no remedy against such  
 “ kind of proceedings, but that those who pur-  
 “ chase their seats in a court of justice, should,  
 “ for the future, be obliged to study a little  
 “ better.”

This treatise on toleration is a petition  
 which humanity with all submission presents  
 to power and prudence. I have sowed a grain  
 that may perhaps produce a rich harvest. We  
 may hope every thing from time, from the good-  
 ness of the heart of our gracious monarch, the  
 wisdom of his ministers, and the spirit of sound  
 reason, which begins to diffuse its salutary in-  
 fluence over all minds.

Nature addresses herself thus to mankind :  
 “ I have formed you all weak and ignorant, to  
 “ vegetate a few moments on that earth, which  
 “ you are afterwards to fatten with your  
 “ carcases. Let your weakness then teach you  
 “ to

“ to succour each other ; and as you are igno-  
 “ rant, bear with, and endeavour mutually to  
 “ instruct each other. Even if ye were all of  
 “ the same way of thinking, which certainly  
 “ will never come to pass, and there should be  
 “ one single person only found amongst you  
 “ who differed from you in belief, you ought  
 “ to forgive him ; for it is I who make him  
 “ think in the manner he does. I have given  
 “ you hands to cultivate the earth, and a faint  
 “ glimmering of reason to conduct yourselves  
 “ by ; and I have planted in your hearts a spirit  
 “ of compassion, that you may assist each other  
 “ under the burthen of life. Do not smother  
 “ that spark, nor suffer it to be corrupted ; for  
 “ know, it is of divine origin : neither substi-  
 “ tute the wretched debates of the schools in  
 “ the place of the voice of nature.

“ It is I alone who unite you all, in despite  
 “ of yourselves, by your mutual wants, even in  
 “ the midst of those bloody wars that you under-  
 “ take for the slightest causes, and that afford  
 “ a continual scene of error, chances, and mis-  
 “ fortunes : It is I alone, who, in a nation, pre-  
 “ vent the fatal effects of the inextinguishable  
 “ differences that subsist between the sword  
 “ and the law, between those two professions  
 “ and

“ and the clergy, and between even the citizen  
 “ and the husbandman. Tho’ ignorant of the  
 “ limits of their own prerogatives, they are in  
 “ despite of themselves obliged to listen to my  
 “ voice, which speaks to their hearts. It is I alone  
 “ who maintain equity in the courts of judica-  
 “ ture, where otherwise every thing would be  
 “ determined by error and caprice, in the midst  
 “ of a confused heap of laws, framed too often  
 “ at a venture, and to supply an immediate call,  
 “ differing from each other in every province  
 “ and town, and almost always contradictory  
 “ in the same place. I alone can inspire the  
 “ love and knowledge of justice, while the  
 “ laws inspire only chicanery and subterfuge.  
 “ He who listens to me seldom forms a wrong  
 “ judgment; while he who seeks only to recon-  
 “ cile contradictory opinions, loses himself in  
 “ the fruitless labour.

“ There is an immense edifice whose foun-  
 “ dation I laid with my own hands. It was at  
 “ once solid and simple; all mankind might  
 “ have entered into it with safety; but they,  
 “ in seeking to ornament, overloaded it with  
 “ useless and fantastic decorations. The  
 “ building is continually falling to decay,  
 “ and they gather up the stones to throw at one  
 “ ano-



“another; while I am incessantly calling out  
“to them, Hold, madmen! clear away the  
“ruins with which you are surrounded, and  
“which you yourselves have made; come and  
“live with me in uninterrupted tranquility  
“within my mansion, that is not to be  
“shaken.”



END of the TWENTY-FOURTH VOLUME.



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